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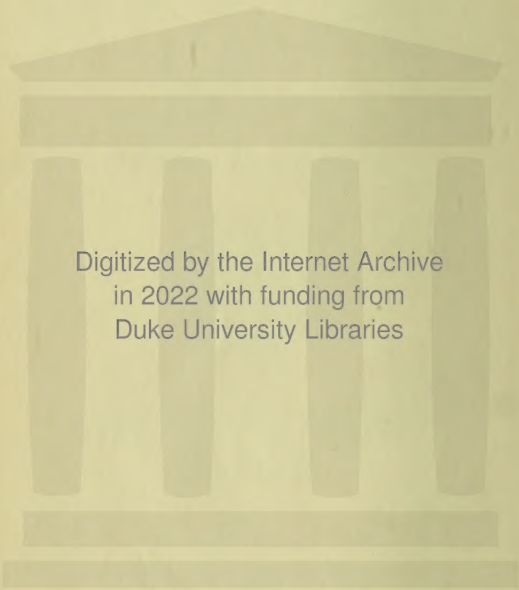
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THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

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THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

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THE
BOOK OF NUMBERS

In the Revised Version

With Introduction and Notes

by

A. H. McNEILE, D.D.

Fellow of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge

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CONTENTS

PAGES

I. INTRODUCTION

I. The Book of Numbers ... ... ix, x

II. Analysis ... ... xi—xiv

III. The Levites ... ... xiv—xviii

IV. The Historical Value of the Book of Numbers xix—xxii

V. The Religious Value of the Book of Numbers xxii—xxvi

VI. The Book of Numbers in the New Testament xxvii

II. TEXT AND NOTES ... ... 1—190

III. INDEX ... ... 191—196

MAPS:

Egypt and Sinai ... ... *At end*

Gilead and Moab ... ... "

ABBREVIATIONS

Aq.	The Greek translation by Aquila.
A.V.	The Authorised Version.
Cf.	Compare.
D	The Deuteronomic document.
DB.	*Dictionary of the Bible.*
E	The Elohistic document.
Enc. Bibl.	*Encyclopaedia Biblica.*
E.VV.	The English Versions, i.e. Authorised and Revised.
Heb.	The Hebrew text.
H.G.	*Historical Geography of the Holy Land.*
id.	*idem*, 'the same,' referring to the book last mentioned.
J	The Jehovistic document.
J. Th. S.	*Journal of Theological Studies.*
Luc.	The Lucianic recension of the Septuagint.
LXX.	The Greek translation known as the Septuagint.
P	The Priestly document.
R	Redactor.
Rel. Sem.	*Religion of the Semites.*
R.V.	The Revised Version.
Sam.	The Samaritan Version of the Pentateuch.
Syr.	The Syriac translation known as the Peshittah.
Vulg.	The Latin translation known as the Vulgate.

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INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS.

The Book of Numbers is the fourth of the six writings which modern students have grouped together under the name of 'the Hexateuch' (see Chapman, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*, p. 6). The Greek title *ἀριθμοί*, of which 'Numbers' is a translation, was given to the book on account of the numberings of the Israelites recorded in it. The Hebrew title is *Bammidhbār* ('In the wilderness'), taken from the words *bemidhbar Sinai* ('in the wilderness of Sinai') in i. 1.

The book of Exodus leaves the Israelites at Sinai, and Leviticus is entirely composed of ritual and other regulations ascribed to Moses at Sinai. Numbers opens with further regulations at Sinai, and then carries forward the history of the journeys to the point when the steppes of Moab opposite Jericho were reached; in the midst of this history it contains another group of regulations: it relates some events which occurred during the stay of the Israelites in Moab, and ends with yet another group of regulations.

The composition of the book is of the same nature as that of Exodus. Two early writings, known as J and E, at first existed separately, but were afterwards fused into the composite work JE; and this was at a later time combined with priestly material P. (On these symbols, the justification for their use, and an account of the distinctive characteristics of the several writings, see Chapman, *Introd.*) The priestly material is to a large

extent collected in the three groups of regulations mentioned above, which are assigned by the compiler respectively to the stay at Sinai (i.—x. 28), the stay at Kadesh (xv.—xix.), and the stay in Moab (xxv. 6—xxxi., xxxiii. 50—xxxvi.). But parts of the remainder of the book are also from P, including a detailed itinerary of the Israelites from Egypt to Moab (ch. xxxiii.). One passage only (xxi. 33—35) appears to be incorporated from Deuteronomy. The JE portions will thus be seen to amount to less than a quarter of the whole. And these portions deal exclusively with the journey from Sinai to Kadesh *before* the forty years wandering to which the people were condemned, and with the journey to Moab *after* the forty years had elapsed. The history of the forty years themselves is a complete blank.

It must not be supposed that either J, E, or P was a simple homogeneous composition. J and E both preserve material of a much earlier date, some parts of which may have existed merely in the form of floating oral tradition, but some must probably have been available in a written form which was incorporated by the narrators. Similarly the compiler of P preserves certain ritual ceremonies, which, though he colours them with his own late language and ideas, must have been handed down from a far past by those whose duty it was to preside over the sanctuaries of Israel, and to perpetuate the ancient ritual customs of the nation. But P not only preserved past traditions but was enriched with supplementary matter by later hands. In this commentary the symbol P is employed to denote all the priestly material, but it must be remembered that, as it stands, it is composed of different *strata*. Thus the book of Numbers was a gradual growth, containing elements which range from the earliest days of Israel's history down to a period later than Nehemiah. Its long and complicated growth was guided by the Holy Spirit in such a way that the completed result, as it lies before us, could fulfil His purpose of illustrating God's self-revelation and the gradual training and development of the Israelite nation for their appointed work in the world.

CHAPTER II.

ANALYSIS.

A. i. 1—x. 10 (P). AT SINAI.

(i) i.—iv. The census of the tribes, their arrangement in camp and on the march, and the duties of the tribe of Levi.

(ii) v.—x. 10. Miscellaneous regulations and other priestly traditions.

(*a*) Exclusion of unclean persons from the camp. v. 1—4.
(*b*) Payments in compensation for wrongs. 5—10.
(*c*) Ordeal of jealousy. 11—31.
(*d*) Nazirites. vi. 1—21.
(*e*) Triple formula of priestly blessing. 22—27.
(*f*) Offerings of the princes for the tabernacle. vii.
(*g*) The golden lampstand. viii. 1—4.
(*h*) The Levites:— 5—26.
their purification and dedication (*vv.* 5—22),
the age of service (*vv.* 23—26).
(*i*) Supplementary Passover. ix. 1—14.
(*j*) Fiery cloud upon the tabernacle. 15—23.
(*k*) Two silver clarions. x. 1—10.

B. x. 11—xxii. 1 (JEP).

JOURNEYS BETWEEN SINAI AND MOAB.

(i) x. 11—xii. 16. Events between Sinai and the Wilderness of Paran.

(*a*) Departure from Sinai; Moses' request to Ḥobab. x. 11—28, 34 (P); 29—33 (J).
(*b*) Prayers connected with the movements of the ark. 35, 36 (J).
(*c*) Murmurers destroyed by fire at Tabērah. xi. 1—3 (E).
(*d*) Manna and Quails. 4—10, 13, 18—24[a], 31—34 (J).
(*e*) The burden of the people too heavy for Moses. 11, 12, 14, 15 (J).
(*f*) Spirit of ecstasy upon the elders. 16, 17, 24[b]—30 (E).
(*g*) Journey to Hazeroth. 35 (J).
(*h*) Miriam and Aaron complain of Moses' Cushite wife. xii. 1 (E).
(*i*) Moses proved unique as a prophet of JEHOVAH. 2—16 (E).

(ii) xiii., xiv. Narrative of the spies. Israel condemned to wander forty years.

(*a*) Spies sent out, who search the land. xiii. 1—17[a], 21[b] (P), 17[b]—21[a], 22—24 (JE).

(*b*) Report of the spies. 25, 26[a], 32 (P), 26[b]—31, 33 (JE).

(*c*) Mutiny of the people. xiv. 1 (partly), 2, 5—7, 10 (P); 1 (partly), 3, 4, 8, 9 (JE).

(*d*) Moses' intercession averts destruction, but all except Caleb forbidden to enter Canaan. 11—24 (JE). [*v.* 25 redactional.]

(*e*) People condemned to wander forty years. Spies die by a plague. 26—30, 32—39[a] (P), 31, 39[b] (JE).

(*f*) Attempted attack on the Negeb, and defeat by the natives. 39[b]—45 (JE).

(iii) xv.—xix. (P, except parts of xvi.). Miscellaneous laws and narratives.

(*a*) Meal-offerings and Libations. xv. 1—16.

(*b*) Contribution of the 'first of *'arīsōth*.' 17—21.

(*c*) Propitiatory offerings for inadvertent transgressions. 22—31.

(*d*) Punishment of the man working on the Sabbath. 32—36.

(*e*) Tassels to be worn at the corners of garments. 37—41.

(*f*) Rebellion of Dathan and Abiram. xvi. 1 (partly), 2[a], 12—15, 25—34 (JE).

(*g*) Self-assertion of Korah and his followers against the tribe of Levi. 1 (partly), 2[b]—7, 18—24, 35, 41—50 (P).

[Self-assertion of *Levites*, Korah and his followers, against the *priests*. 1 (partly), 8—11, 16, 17, 36—40 (P2).]

(*h*) Superiority of the tribe of Levi proved by the blossoming of Aaron's staff. xvii.

(*i*) Duties of priests and Levites. xviii. 1—7.

(*j*) Priests' dues. 8—20.

(*k*) Levites' dues. 21—24.

(*l*) A further payment to the priests. 25—32.

(*m*) Purification by the ashes of a red cow. xix.

(iv) xx.—xxii. 1. Journeys and events at the close of the wanderings until the arrival at Moab.

(*a*) Arrival at the Wilderness of Zin. xx. 1[a] (P).

(*b*) Death of Miriam. 1[b] (E).

(*c*) Striking of the rock at Meribah. 2—13 (P).

(*d*) Permission to pass through Edom refused. 14—21 (JE).

(*e*) Death of Aaron. 22—29 (P).
(*f*) Victory over Canaanites at Hormah. xxi. 1—3 (?E).
(*g*) The bronze serpent. 4—9 (JE).
(*h*) Fragment of an itinerary—Oboth and Iye-abarim. 10, 11 (P).
(*i*) Journey to Moab. 12—20 (JE).
(*j*) Victory over Sihon. 21—32 (JE).
(*k*) Victory over Og. 33—35 (D).
(*l*) Arrival at Moab. xxii. 1 (P).

C. xxii. 2—xxxvi. (JEP). IN MOAB.

(i) xxii. 2—xxv. 5. Events in Moab.
(*a*) Balaam :— xxii. 2—xxiv. (JE).
His summons by Balak, and journey to Moab. xxii. 2—41 (JE).
His prophetic utterances [*v.* 27 redactional]. xxiii. 1—26 (E).
His prophetic utterances. xxiii. 28—xxiv. 19 (J).
Further utterances. xxiv. 20—24 (source unknown).
His return home. 25 (JE).
(*b*) Moabite women entice the Israelites into immorality and idolatry. xxv. 1—5 (JE).

(ii) xxv. 6—xxxvi. (P). Miscellaneous laws and narratives.
(*a*) The zeal of Phinehas and its reward. xxv. 6—15.
(*b*) Command to vex the Midianites. 16—18.
(*c*) The second Census. xxvi.
(*d*) Law of inheritance by daughters. xxvii. 1—11.
(*e*) Moses commanded to view the land of Canaan before his death. 12—14.
(*f*) Joshua appointed to succeed him. 15—23.
(*g*) Amounts of public offerings at the sacred seasons. xxviii., xxix.
(*h*) Validity of vows taken by women. xxx.
(*i*) The sacred war against Midian :— xxxi.
Victory. 1—18.
Purification from contact with the dead. 19—24.
Method of dividing the spoil. 25—54.
(*j*) Assignment of land to tribes on the east of Jordan. xxxii. (P, except 39, 41 f. JE).
(*k*) Itinerary from Egypt to Moab. xxxiii. 1—49.
Commands respecting the settlement in Canaan. 50—56.
(*l*) Israel's boundaries west of the Jordan. xxxiv. 1—15.

(*m*) Princes appointed to superintend the allotment of the land. 16—29.
(*n*) The Levitical cities. xxxv. 1—8.
(*o*) The Cities of Refuge, and the law of homicide. 9—34.
(*p*) Heiresses not to be married out of their tribe. xxxvi.

CHAPTER III.

THE LEVITES.

As the book of Numbers deals at some length with the status and duties of a certain body of men called Levites, it will be useful to give a brief account of them. In the history of the Jews after the return from exile, in *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, we find frequent mention (about 50 times) of the Levites as a body of temple officials. They were inferior to the priests, in that they might not perform the sacred rite of sacrifice, or handle the sacred objects in the Temple; but they assisted in the general conduct of worship, for which purpose they were divided into courses, which served in rotation. In particular there were formed from their number three important choirs or musical guilds, which led the praises of the congregation. The origin of this body of men, set apart for sacred duties but inferior to the priests, seems to have been due to the advice of Ezekiel the priestly prophet, who, after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, gained great influence over his fellow priests in exile. In xliv. 10—16 he condemns those priests who had previously taken part in the image-worship practised in many of the country sanctuaries throughout Palestine, and declares that they ought to be reduced to the position of servants to those priests who had faithfully conducted the pure worship of Jehovah in Jerusalem. We gather from this that before the exile there was no official body of Levites who were inferior to the priests; for if there had been, his words would be entirely pointless. And in 1, 2 *Kings* and *Jeremiah* this conclusion finds support from the fact that though priests play a large part, Levites (with three exceptions to be noted presently)

are not so much as mentioned. The absence of Levites *as an inferior body* is also conspicuous in *Deuteronomy*, which dates from the same period as Jeremiah. In that book the expression 'the priests the Levites' occurs with some frequency, shewing that the writer considered priests and Levites to be identical. The same expression is found in one important passage in Jeremiah; in xxxiii. 18 Jehovah makes a solemn promise that the priests the Levites shall never 'want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings and to burn oblations and to do sacrifice continually.' And these were precisely the privileges which were denied to the post-exilic Levites.

In 1 K. xii. 31 we have an interpretation of the word Levite. The writer condemns Jeroboam's action as sinful, in appointing men as priests who were not of the *tribe of Levi*. And in Ex. xxxii. 25—29 (J) occurs a narrative which appears to supply an explanation of the consecration of the tribe of Levi to the sacred office.

It is possible, indeed, to go back to a still earlier stage, in which the Levites were not a tribe, but a caste or profession consisting of men from any tribe who were skilled in priestly duties. In Jud. xvii. 7—13 a Levite of the family of *Judah* is welcomed by Micah as the priest of his shrine in preference to his son whom he had previously consecrated to that office (*v.* 5).

And finally we reach the primitive condition in which there were neither priests nor Levites as a body who performed sacrifices. In Ex. xxiv. 5 the sacrifices at the most solemn crisis of Israel's early history were offered by 'young men of the children of Israel.'

Thus four stages are discernible—(1) there were no priests to offer sacrifice, and Moses himself performed all that was necessary in the way of dispensing oracles, i.e. revealing the divine will on any point on which men might ask for guidance (see Ex. xxxiii. 7—11). (2) Those who afterwards offered sacrifice and administered the divine oracle at the sanctuaries in Palestine became recognised as a sacred body of priests, and were called Levites. (3) The members of this sacred body came to be thought of as connected by blood relationship

(in some cases, no doubt, fathers trained their sons in the duties, and the office became hereditary in the family); and they were all considered as members of one tribe descended from Levi the son of Jacob. (4) After the exile the Levites became a body inferior to the priests, although all priests and Levites were regarded as descended from Levi; the priests were those only who traced their descent from Aaron.

But writers after the exile delighted to imagine that the organization which they valued so highly was in existence in the earlier history of the nation. P ascribes the origin of the Levites as an ecclesiastical body to the initiative of Moses. And the Chronicler ascribes their complete organization as singers, porters &c., to the initiative of David, and represents that organization as having been in full working order throughout the reigns of his successors[1].

The following is a summary of the regulations respecting the Levites, ascribed to Moses in P.

Num. i. 50. They were appointed to take care of the tabernacle and its furniture on the march; to encamp round it; to take it down, and erect it.

iii. 5—9. Their appointment to take care of the tabernacle is repeated, with the addition that Moses is to 'set them before Aaron the priest,' i.e. formally present them for consecration.

iii. 11—13. Their consecration was substituted for the consecration of the firstborn of Israel.

iii. 14—51. The foregoing sections are expanded: (*a*) 14—39 gives the three families of the Levites with their subdivisions, first as 'sons' and 'grandsons' of Levi (14—20), and then, literally, as families (21—39). Each family had particular duties assigned to it:—(1) The *Gershonites* (21—26), who camped on

[1] As said above, the Levites are not mentioned in 1, 2 Kings and Jeremiah, with three exceptions. Two of these have already been noticed; and in each of them Levites *are* priests. In 1 Kings viii. 3 the *priests* took up the ark, the tent and the vessels; but in *v.* 4 the words 'and Levites' are added. We are clearly justified in regarding this isolated exception as an interpolation by a writer of the age of the Chronicler.

the west of the tabernacle, had the charge of the hangings which formed the Tent and the Court, the two screens which formed the entrance of the Tent and the Court respectively, and the cords of the Tent. (2) The *Kohathites* (27—32) were the most important family, because to their first subdivision, the Amramites, belonged Moses and Aaron and the sons of Aaron, i.e. the priests, who camped on the east of the tabernacle. The remainder, i.e. the non-priestly families, of the Kohathites, who camped on the south of the tabernacle, had the charge of the sacred furniture and the veil which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. Like the other divisions they were under the command of a 'prince,' but over him was the 'prince of the princes,' Eleazar the son of Aaron, because the charge of the sacred objects needed special oversight. (In Ex. xxxviii. 21 the inventory of all things connected with the tabernacle is, by anticipation, entrusted to the Levites generally; and they are superintended by Aaron's second son Ithamar.) (3) The *Merarites* (33—38), who camped on the north of the tabernacle, had the charge of all the woodwork and metal of the Tent and the Court, and the cords and pegs of the Court.

(*b*) 40—51. Not only were the Levites appointed as a substitute for the firstborn, but also all their cattle for the firstlings of Israel's cattle. And the surplus of the firstborn above the number of the Levites must be redeemed at 5 shekels each.

iv. 1—49. A further expansion of the duties of the three families and of the priests in connexion with the transport of the tabernacle and its furniture. The chief additions are (1) the care with which the priests must wrap up the sacred objects before the Levites might touch them, and (2) the age of service for the Levites, i.e. from 30 to 50 years old.

viii. 16—18 states yet again that the Levites are substitutes for the firstborn. 23—26 repeats the age of service, a modification, however, being introduced that some kind of service may be performed after the age of 50 (see note).

viii. 5—15 describes the ceremony of consecration, which should be contrasted with the ceremony for priests (Ex. xxix. 1—37). The Levites were sprinkled with the 'water of sin,' they

shaved the whole of their body and washed their clothes. They were presented by Moses before the tabernacle, and the people (by chosen representatives) laid their hands on them, as a sign that they were their offering to JEHOVAH; and then Aaron solemnly offered them (lit. 'waved,' see on *v.* 11). After that, the Levites presented victims for sacrifice—a bullock for a burnt-offering, with the accompanying meal-offering of flour and oil, and a bullock for a sin-offering.

xvi., xvii. The superiority of Levites over laymen is demonstrated by means of a narrative. Later insertions in xvi. deal with the superiority of priests over Levites (see notes).

xviii. 1—7 sums up once more the general duties of the Levites in their service to the priests.

21—24 deals with their means of living. This consisted of the tithe of all the live stock, corn, fruit &c. of Israel. It became the Levites' possession, when the Israelites offered it every year as a 'contribution' (see on *v.* 24).

25—32. When the Levites received their tithe, they were to pay a tithe of it to the priests, as JEHOVAH'S 'contribution.'

xxxi. 25—30 assigns to the Levites a special perquisite. When spoil was captured in battle, half was to be given to the soldiers and half to the rest of the people. From the soldiers' half, $\frac{1}{500}$th of the captured slaves and animals was to be given to the priests, and from the people's half, $\frac{1}{50}$ to the Levites.

xxxv. When Palestine was reached, the means of living were to be greatly increased, by the assignment to the Levites of 48 cities, with a piece of pasture land surrounding each to the extent of 2000 cubits on all four sides. This law is assumed in Lev. xxv. 32—34 (P). It is in marked contrast with the state of things implied in Deut., where the Levites, i.e. the Levitical priests, throughout Palestine are in a state of poverty which commends them to the charity of the Israelites, together with widows and orphans (see Deut. xii. 12, 18 f., xiv. 27, 29, xvi. 11, 14, xxvi. 11 ff.).

CHAPTER IV.

THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE BOOK OF NUMBERS.

When the question is asked—What is the historical value of any given book of the Old Testament?—the answer is not as simple as it might, at first sight, appear. It is not enough to say that a book is historically valuable in proportion as it relates with accuracy a series of facts or events. Such an answer is misleading because it confuses *history* with *chronicle*. The value, for example, of Grote's *History of Greece* would be seriously diminished if not destroyed, if there were substituted for it an accurate table of all the events related in it in their correct order with dates. A bare record of past events is of little use for the present. What the reader of history needs above everything is to learn the *meaning* of the events—their effect on the life of nations, on the life of individuals, on the relations of one country or race with another. He wants to know the place which actions held with regard to development, social progress, religious advance; how they influenced the character of the actors; the motives which led the actors to do what they did—and so forth. Thus true history is written not for mere information but for instruction, that the readers may learn what to imitate and what to avoid, how to act under given circumstances and how not to act. For this purpose a list of events is useless. The writers select their material, and arrange and comment. They present history *as it appeals to them* in its character of a guide for the future.

This is true of all history; and Israelite history is not an exception. The writers of the book of Numbers selected such material as seemed to them important, and presented it in such a way as to afford instruction to their readers. As has been said above, the earliest of them probably had access to an older body of traditions. And these traditions were of very varying degrees of accuracy. But whether they were accurate or not, and whether the writers repeated them accurately or not, the

lessons which they embodied could be utilised. Thus it is that great caution must be exercised in the attempt to decide how much of the narrative in the book of Numbers actually took place in the lifetime of Moses. The tendency in all ages has been to allow full play to folklore, legend, and imagination, when dealing with a great hero of far off days. The impression produced by past traditions leads to the laying on of fresh colouring which heightens the impression. And writers who compiled their narratives with a purpose that was primarily religious, would be likely to select just those details which contributed the most striking touches to the great portrait. This is true both of the facts of Moses' life and of the legislation which was ascribed to him. The decisions on social and religious matters which he must have given during the years of his leadership appear to have been of so striking and elevated a character that his fame as a lawgiver was never forgotten, and it became customary, throughout the whole history of the nation, to assign to his initiative all law—moral, social, and religious. It is impossible, therefore, to decide with certainty whether any given command can be traceable to him. The writer knew of it as a regulation or custom in force when he wrote; but how much older it may be can only be conjectured from the nature of the command itself, or from a comparison of it with other parts of the legislation, or with the known facts of history, or with the customs of other nations at a similar stage of development.

It may safely be said that the history and character of the nation of Israel require such a person as Moses to account for them. If the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt (which there is no good reason for doubting), and if they afterwards settled in Canaan (which is one of the certain facts of the world's history), they must have had a leader capable of inducing them to break away from their slavery, and of welding them, in spite of frequent mutinies and quarrels, into a tribal and religious unity which years of desert wanderings and hostile encounters could not dissolve. Starting from this consideration we may say that the following main facts, on which the traditions of our

book were based, appear to admit of no reasonable doubt. A collection of nomad tribes, belonging to the Semitic family, and known by the general name of Israelites, wandered about in the district immediately south of Palestine, and settled for a time at a spot which bore the ancient Semitic name Ḳadesh; and from thence they, or some of them, moved to the steppes of Moab opposite Jericho. They were under the command of a chief named Moses, who appears to have been a man of remarkable power of command and personal influence, and of a high moral character. And he died in Moab before the tribes who accompanied him made their way across the Jordan into Palestine.

This broad outline is filled in with all the narratives and laws in the book, which must now be examined somewhat more in detail.

(*a*) *Narratives.* The analysis of the contents (pp. xi—xiv) shews which narratives are related by P only: and on studying them the reader will find that, almost without exception, P's purpose in recording them was to illustrate, or account for, existing institutions, regulations or customs of his day, and that many of them are distinctively *ecclesiastical.* In other words P's narratives are only laws in narrative clothing, and therefore very few of them can be regarded as possessing even a basis of actual Mosaic history.

On the other hand the narratives of JE, some of which P has adopted with alterations and enlargements[1], are based on traditions which in all probability took their rise from actual facts; but in their present form the events are described from a *didactic* point of view. If the P narratives are laws clothed in the dress of stories, the JE narratives are genuine stories clothed in such a dress as to make them capable of teaching religious truths. Some of them have the appearance of being due to the tendency, mentioned above, to surround the career of the great hero with a halo of reverent imagination.

[1] With these must be included the striking of the rock (xx. 2—13) which has its parallel in JE (Ex. xvii. 1—7).

(*b*) *Laws.* These are placed in three groups, and belong exclusively to P, no legislation from JE being found outside the book of Exodus. This does not, however, forbid the possibility that the priestly circles may have preserved some ritual details from an early date. And though their present *form* is late, chs. v., vi., xix., xxxi. contain elements which are certainly primitive, but whether any of them date from a period as early as Moses it is impossible to say. Allowance, however, having been made for early elements, the great majority of the legislation and formal injunctions in P point, with unmistakeable clearness, to a late stage in the nation's life, and reflect the ecclesiastical order of post-exilic times.

But what has been said hitherto is far from being the measure of the historical value of the book. If details were added at later times to the portraiture of Moses, and if the customs and regulations of later times are ascribed to him in the shape either of law or narrative, the book, when divided into its two chief components, JE and P, becomes a valuable source of information as to the laws and customs, the state of development, and the general character, of the periods at which the parts were severally written. By a careful study of the Hexateuch large additions can be made to the history of Israel which we are accustomed to draw from the books of Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the prophets. And though we should naturally be glad to know much more than we do about the time of Moses, those who believe that the Bible was written under the guidance of the Spirit of God can rest content in the knowledge that it is He who has withheld from us further information.

CHAPTER V.

THE RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE BOOK OF NUMBERS.

The aim of the foregoing chapter was to make it clear that the writers of the book of Numbers did not set before them the object of presenting an exact chronicle of events, but that

they wished to convey religious instruction. And from this point of view the book contains teaching of lasting worth. Here also it is useful to observe the distinction between JE and P, for each has messages of a different kind.

(1) JE with its simple and spontaneous narrative has a two-fold value, which lies (*a*) in its portrayal of character, (*b*) in its conception of the relation in which JEHOVAH stands to His people.

(*a*) The character of Moses is vividly set forth, both in its strength and in its occasional weakness. We see his humility (xii. 3), his trust in JEHOVAH (x. 29—32), his faithfulness to and intimacy with Him (xii. 6—8), his affection for his difficult and unruly people (xi. 2, 10—15, xxi. 7), his generosity and public spirit (xi. 27—29, xii.). And side by side with this, his despondency (xi. 10—15), and his wrath when provoked (xvi. 15, parts of xx. 1—13). It is the character of a real man of flesh and blood, of like passions with ourselves, but a character well worthy of being admired and reverenced by the most religious nation that the world has known.

And the beauty of it is thrown into stronger relief by the character of the people—their dislike of restraint (xvi. 12—14), their murmurings and mutinies (xi. 1, 4—6; xii. 1, 2; xiv. 1—4, 10), their vehement repentance (xiv. 39^b, 40; xxi. 7), in the former case followed by wilful self-assertion (xiv. 41—45), their weakness in yielding to temptation (xxv. 1—5). The prophetic writers have indeed succeeded in presenting their facts in such a way as to point out to posterity what to imitate and what to avoid (cf. 1 Cor. x. 11). Their insight into human nature has made their story instructive for all time.

(*b*) But that which constitutes the supreme value of every piece of history in the Old Testament is the abiding conviction of the writers that JEHOVAH stands in a real relation to every event. Like the Psalmist (xvi. 8) they 'set Jehovah always before them'; and thus all history was for them a commentary on the words 'I will be what I will be' (Ex. iii. 14), a revelation of His character and will. After the fragment of the narrative of Moses' request to Ḥobab (x. 29—32), the first passage in JE

tells of *prayer* to JEHOVAH, whose presence was represented by the ark (x. 35 f.). It is a fitting opening to the record of divine care and guidance. And the effect of 'the fervent prayer of a righteous man' is seen when Moses' intercession for the people availed to avert their destruction (xiv. 13—20, xxi. 7). The loving care of JEHOVAH was shewn in providing for the physical needs of His people by the manna and quails (xi.), and by the serpent of bronze which healed them (xxi. 8 f.). His protection of the whole nation, because of the great purposes for which He had raised them up on the stage of history, is set forth in the story of Balaam and his utterances (xxii.—xxiv.). And that these purposes might not be thwarted, He helped them to conquer Sihon and Og, the last hindrances to their approach to the promised land (xxi. 21—32 and (D) 33—35). But He not only cared for the nation as a whole; He also came into immediate personal relations with individuals. He rewarded the man (P, two men) who had been faithful to Him when all the other spies were faint-hearted (xiv. 24, 30). To prophets He would appear in visions and dreams, but to Moses, the greatest of the prophets, He spoke 'mouth to mouth,' and allowed him to 'behold His form' (xii. 6—8). And when it was necessary to rebuke Aaron and Miriam, He 'came down in a pillar of cloud' (xii. 5). Moses was so richly endued with His Spirit that JEHOVAH could take some of it and put it upon seventy elders (xi. 16 f., 24^{b}—26). All these passages shine with the thought that JEHOVAH is not a God far off, but is in contact with men. But with all His mercy and care and guidance, He is a God of the sternest justice, who must punish sin. This is a constant refrain throughout the history (xi. 1—3, 33; xii. 10; xiv.; xvi.; xx. 12; xxi. 6), and echoes the notes of warning which were so often needed from the lips of the prophets.

(2) And P, by incorporating and adding to JE, endorses all this moral and spiritual instruction; but he also offers some further teaching which is peculiarly his own. To make this clear, a short explanation is necessary. Before the exile, when there were many sanctuaries in all parts of the country, some of

which had in ancient days belonged to the Canaanites and still partook largely of their original character, idolatry was a peril from which the chosen people were never free. Shortly before the final defeat by the Chaldeans, a movement had been started in Jerusalem which discredited the country sanctuaries, and aimed at confining all sacrifice to the temple at Jerusalem. From that time the priests attached to the temple naturally gained a new prestige. This reform was the outward expression of a growing conviction that the nature of JEHOVAH was spiritual, a growing realisation of His transcendence, His separateness from all human limitations, and from all earthly contact with men; and this divine characteristic was described by words derived from the root ḳ^{a}D^{e}Sh which is commonly translated 'to be holy.' When the priests of Jerusalem were carried to Babylon, a new literature began. It was no doubt based upon former priestly usage in the temple, but it was now dominated by the thought of JEHOVAH'S 'holiness.' A portion of it survives in the 'Law of Holiness' (see Chapman, *Introd.* pp. 111 f.). But a great impetus was given to it by Ezekiel the priestly prophet, who sketched, in the form of a vision (chs. xl.–xlviii.), an ideal system of worship. When the patriotic and religious minority of the exiles returned to Jerusalem by permission of Cyrus, they proceeded to carry these ideas into practice. The temple, in which the 'holy' presence of JEHOVAH was enshrined, was jealously guarded from the faintest possibility of pollution. Into the innermost shrine only the high priest might enter, into the outer shrine the rest of the priests. They were served by an inferior, but sacred or 'holy' body, called Levites. The mass of the community, the laymen of the nation, might not enter the building or touch any of the sacred utensils under pain of death. And yet the whole community, since they were the chosen people of JEHOVAH, were also 'holy,' in the sense of being 'separate' from all foreign nations; and it was the ardent wish of Ezra the priest to guard this national exclusiveness from violation. Thus there were successive grades of sacredness, the centre of all being the awful and unapproachable presence of JEHOVAH Himself.

When the priestly circles edited their ancient national records, they loved to idealize the past, and to imagine that the chosen people had been possessed of this religious system from the first. The 'Tent' in the wilderness in which, as JE related, Moses used to declare God's will to the people (Ex. xxxiii. 7—11), was represented by P as being constructed on the analogy of the temple; it was a miniature, portable, structure, but filled with all the gorgeous magnificence of gold and silver, precious stones and coloured tapestries. JEHOVAH'S presence—'the Glory'—tabernacled in the inner shrine. To the outer shrine only the priests, the sons of Aaron, were admitted; and it was surrounded by a court in which the priests were served by the Levites. The jealous guarding of the sacred dwelling from pollution is also seen in the arrangement of the camp (Num. ii., iii.); the tribes pitched their tents round the tabernacle, but the priests and Levites formed an inner cordon, 'that there be no wrath upon the congregation of Israel' (see p. 9).

Thus the religious value of P in Exodus and Numbers is the same. It consists in the twofold conception of the dwelling of JEHOVAH in the midst of His people, and of the awful sacredness of everything connected with Him. In their idealization of the past the priestly writers were able to convey religious instruction of the deepest value—a value which would not necessarily be increased if their words were a record of actual fact. Parable or fiction can teach divine truths no less clearly than history. The whole work of P in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers contributes 'to the great central thought, the magnificent ideal which has yet to be realised in the Christian Church—a perfectly organized body, consecrated to the God whose Glory tabernacles in their midst. From the Jewish nation, as such, the Glory is departed, but the hope of the Christian Church rests upon the historic fact that the Word tabernacled among men, and there were those who saw His Glory (Jn. i. 14).'

CHAPTER VI.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The Old Testament was the Bible of the writers of the New Testament, by whom the following passages in Numbers are quoted or alluded to[1].

1.	*The actions or character of individuals.*	
	Moses faithful in God's 'house' (Num. xii. 7).	Heb. iii. 2, 5.
	Balaam: his avarice (xxii.),	2 Pet. ii. 15 f.; Jude 11.
	his enticement of the Israelites to idolatry (xxxi. 16).	Rev. ii. 14.
	Korah and his company (xvi.).	Jude 11.
	xvi. 38.	Heb. xii. 3.
	xvi. 5.	2 Tim. ii. 19.
2.	*The sins and punishments of the people.*	Acts xiii. 18; 1 Cor. x. 5f., 8—11.
		Heb. iii. 7—iv. 3; Jude 5.
3.	*The care and protection of Jehovah.*	
	Manna (xi. 4—9).	John vi. 30—35, 41—58; Rev. ii. 17.
	Water from the rock (xx. 11).	1 Cor. x. 3, 4.
	Sheep not having a shepherd (xxvii. 17).	Matt. ix. 36; Mk. vi. 34.
	The bronze serpent (xxi. 8 f.).	John iii. 14.
4.	*Laws and regulations.*	
	Passover (ix. 12).	John xix. 36; 1 Cor. v. 7 f.; cf. Eph. i. 7 (with Armitage Robinson's note), Col. i. 14.
	Fulfilment of vows (xxx. 2).	Matt. v. 33.
	Nazirites (vi.).	Lk. i. 15; Acts xviii. 18, xxi. 26.
	Tithe paid to the Levites (xviii. 21—24).	Heb. vii. 5.
	Ashes of a cow for purification (xix.).	Heb. ix. 13 f.

[1] Reference should be made to the notes on the several passages in the commentary, where all these quotations and allusions are mentioned.

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES

COMMONLY CALLED

NUMBERS

P AND the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of 1
Sinai, in the tent of meeting, on the first day of the

FIRST DIVISION: chs. i. 1—x. 10. At SINAI.

CHAP. I.

Chs. i. 1—x. 10 form the first main division of the book. It is entirely derived from P, and contains a series of injunctions bearing upon ritual and Levitical matters, which are represented as forming part of the legislation at Sinai. A comparison of i. 1 with x. 11 shews that the chapters are regarded as occupying the last nineteen days before the departure from the sacred mountain. A month had elapsed since the Tabernacle had been completed and set up (cf. Ex. xl. 1, 17), and the compiler of the Hexateuch assigns to that period the communication of the laws in Leviticus, and also the offerings of the princes for the Tabernacle (Num. vii.) and the law of the supplementary Passover (ix. 1—14).

The contents of this section are as follows:

i.—iv. The census of the tribes, their arrangement in camp and on the march, and the duties of the sacred tribe of Levi.

v., vi. A series of unconnected regulations dealing with (*a*) the exclusion of unclean persons from the camp (v. 1—4), (*b*) payments in compensation for wrongs (*vv.* 5—10), (*c*) the Ordeal of Jealousy (*vv.* 11—31), (*d*) Nazirites (vi. 1—21), (*e*) the triple formula of priestly blessing (*vv.* 22—27).

vii. The offerings of the princes.

viii. 1—4. The golden Lampstand.

viii. 5—26. The Levites: their purification and dedication (*vv.* 5—22), the age of service (*vv.* 23—26).

ix. 1—14. The supplementary Passover.

ix. 15—23. The fiery cloud upon the Tabernacle.

x. 1—10. The two silver clarions.

The great variety of these contents makes it probable that they were selected by the compiler from a larger mass of traditions which had been developed in the priestly circle of which he was a member.

1—16. Moses is directed to number the fighting men of Israel with the help of twelve princes.

1. *the tent of meeting*] Heb. *'ōhel mō'ēd*. A.V. 'tabernacle of the

second month, in the second year after they were come out *P*
2 of the land of Egypt, saying, Take ye the sum of all the
congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by
their fathers' houses, according to the number of the names,
3 every male, by their polls; from twenty years old and
upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel, thou
4 and Aaron shall number them by their hosts. And with
you there shall be a man of every tribe; every one head of
5 his fathers' house. And these are the names of the men
that shall stand with you: of Reuben; Elizur the son of
6 Shedeur. Of Simeon; Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.
7 Of Judah; Nahshon the son of Amminadab. Of Issachar;
8

congregation' confuses *mō'ēd* with *'ēdah*. LXX. σκηνὴ τοῦ μαρτυρίου ('tent of witness') confuses *mō'ēd* with *'ēdūth*. The name 'tent of meeting' is a term very frequently employed in P for the Tabernacle (cf. iii. 7 f., iv. 2 f., Ex. xxvii. 21, Lev. i. 1, 3). Ex. xxix. 42 (P) shews the meaning which attached to it—'where I will meet with you to speak there unto thee'; it was understood to mean 'the tent where Jehovah met His people by appointment,' the 'tent of tryst.' But the name was also used in earlier times for the sacred tent, which in Ex. xxxiii. 7—11 (E) is pictured as an ordinary nomad tent which Moses could himself carry and pitch outside the camp. And it seems probable that in the primitive days of which E preserves a record a somewhat different meaning attached to the name. See note on xii. 4.

2. *their families*] Rather **their clans**, i.e. groups of families related by blood.

fathers' houses] here denotes *families*, smaller groups consisting of close relations; see *v.* 4, Ex. xii. 3. The term is, however, elastic. It may denote even an entire tribe, as being descended from a single ancestor (Num. xvii. 2), or the main subdivision of a tribe, i.e. a 'clan' (iii. 24, Ex. vi. 14).

their polls] lit. *skulls*, a metaphor for 'individual persons.' Cf. our word 'poll-tax,' and the 'poll' at an election. This expression and 'fathers' houses' are not found earlier than P.

5. The twenty-four names in the following verses recur in chs. ii., vii. and x. 14—27. Some of them are of types which were frequent in early times, Amminadab (*v.* 7), Ammihud (*v.* 10), Elishama (*id.*), Abidan (*v.* 11), Ahiezer (*v.* 12), Ahira (*v.* 15), but others are unknown to pre-exilic O.T. writings, Nethanel (*v.* 8), Gamaliel (*v.* 10), and the names compounded with Zur and Shaddai (including Shedeur, *v.* 5). No certain traces of names compounded with Shaddai have been found apart from this list. It is probable that the compiler made an artificial selection of ancient and modern names. See Gray, *Numbers*, pp. 6 f., and *Heb. Proper Names*, pp. 191—211.

7. *Nakshon the son of Amminadab*] See Ruth iv. 20, Mt. i. 4.

P Nethanel the son of Zuar. Of Zebulun; Eliab the son of 9
Helon. Of the children of Joseph: of Ephraim; Elishama 10
the son of Ammihud: of Manasseh; Gamaliel the son of
Pedahzur. Of Benjamin; Abidan the son of Gideoni. Of 11 12
Dan; Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. Of Asher; Pagiel 13
the son of Ochran. Of Gad; Eliasaph the son of [1]Deuel. 14
Of Naphtali; Ahira the son of Enan. These are they that 15 16
were called of the congregation, the princes of the tribes of
their fathers; they were the heads of the [2]thousands of
Israel. And Moses and Aaron took these men which are 17
expressed by name: and they assembled all the congrega- 18
tion together on the first day of the second month, and they
declared their pedigrees after their families, by their fathers'
houses, according to the number of the names, from twenty
years old and upward, by their polls. As the LORD com- 19
manded Moses, so he numbered them in the wilderness of
Sinai.

And the children of Reuben, Israel's firstborn, their gene- 20
rations, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to
the number of the names, by their polls, every male from
twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth
to war; those that were numbered of them, of the tribe of 21
Reuben, were forty and six thousand and five hundred.

Of the children of Simeon, their generations, by their 22
families, by their fathers' houses, those that were numbered

[1] In ch. ii. 14, *Reuel* [2] Or, *families*

8. *Nethanel*] 'God hath given.' The name is frequent in Chron., Ezr. and Neh., and is the same as Nathaniel, Jn. i. 45.

10. *Gamaliel*] 'God is a [my] reward.' See Acts v. 34. It was the name of several Rabbis in the 1st and following centuries A.D.

14. *Deuel*] The more probable form Reuel is given in ii. 14. Cf. x. 29. The letters R and D are easily confused in Hebrew.

16. *they that were called*] i.e. 'chosen' to help Moses in conducting the census.

their fathers] Their ancestors, the sons of Jacob.

thousands] Another term for a group of relations, irrespective of its exact number; it is probable that it denotes a large group such as a clan, rather than a small group such as a 'fathers' house' (*v.* 2); cf. Jud. vi. 15, 1 S. x. 19, 21, Mic. v. 2.

17—46. The numbers ascertained by the census.

There can be no doubt that the numbers given in chs. i.—iii. and

thereof, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that *P*
23 were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of them, of the tribe of Simeon, were fifty and nine thousand and three hundred.

24 Of the children of Gad, their generations, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that
25 were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of them, of the tribe of Gad, were forty and five thousand six hundred and fifty.

26 Of the children of Judah, their generations, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that
27 were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of them, of the tribe of Judah, were threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred.

28 Of the children of Issachar, their generations, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that
29 were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of them, of the tribe of Issachar, were fifty and four thousand and four hundred.

30 Of the children of Zebulun, their generations, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that
31 were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of them, of the tribe of Zebulun, were fifty and seven thousand and four hundred.

xxvi. are purely artificial. Gray (*Numbers*, pp. 10—15) shews that (1) they are impossible, (2) when compared with each other they yield absurd results, (3) they are inconsistent with numbers given in Hebrew literature earlier than P.

(1) The number of male Israelites of fighting age is put at 603,550, which appears in round numbers as 600,000 in xi. 21, Ex. xii. 37. But the fighting men could form hardly more than a quarter of the whole; so that the population would reach a total of some 2½ millions. The present population of the Sinaitic peninsula is estimated at from 4,000 to 6,000, and a body of over 2 million people could not find subsistence even if dispersed all over the peninsula.

(2) The male first-born numbered 22,273 (iii. 43); and it is fair

P Of the children of Joseph, *namely*, of the children of 32
Ephraim, their generations, by their families, by their fathers'
houses, according to the number of the names, from twenty
years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;
those that were numbered of them, of the tribe of Ephraim, 33
were forty thousand and five hundred.

Of the children of Manasseh, their generations, by their 34
families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number
of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that
were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of 35
them, of the tribe of Manasseh, were thirty and two thousand
and two hundred.

Of the children of Benjamin, their generations, by their 36
families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number
of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that
were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of 37
them, of the tribe of Benjamin, were thirty and five thousand
and four hundred.

Of the children of Dan, their generations, by their 38
families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number
of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that
were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of 39
them, of the tribe of Dan, were threescore and two thousand
and seven hundred.

Of the children of Asher, their generations, by their 40
families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number
of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that

to suppose that the number of families in which the first-born child was a female would be about the same, giving a total of some 44,546 families; in which case there was an average of about 50 children to a family.

Again, from iii. 12 we gather that the 'first-born' means the first-born of the *mother*, not the eldest son of a father who might have several wives. There were, therefore, 44,546 mothers. But this number (assuming that the number of women over 20 years of age was the same as that of the men, i.e. 600,000) involves the extreme improbability that only 1 in 14 women over 20 years of age had any children.

(3) According to Jud. v. 8 the tribes of Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, Naphtali, Zebulun and Issachar yielded only 40,000 persons, i.e. apparently fighting men. But in these six tribes the fighting men were 273,300 at the first census, and 301,000 at the second (Num. xxvi.).

41 were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of *P*
them, of the tribe of Asher, were forty and one thousand
and five hundred.
42 Of the children of Naphtali, their generations, by their
families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number
of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that
43 were able to go forth to war; those that were numbered of
them, of the tribe of Naphtali, were fifty and three thousand
and four hundred.
44 These are they that were numbered, which Moses and
Aaron numbered, and the princes of Israel, being twelve
45 men: they were each one for his fathers' house. So all
they that were numbered of the children of Israel by their
fathers' houses, from twenty years old and upward, all that
46 were able to go forth to war in Israel; even all they that
were numbered were six hundred thousand and three
thousand and five hundred and fifty.
47 But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not
48 numbered among them. For the LORD spake unto Moses,
49 saying, Only the tribe of Levi thou shalt not number, neither
shalt thou take the sum of them among the children of
50 Israel: but appoint thou the Levites over the tabernacle of
the testimony, and over all the furniture thereof, and over

Again, in Jud. xviii. it is related that the Danites had no proper territory belonging to them; and therefore 600 armed men (obviously the greater part of the tribe) migrated to the north. But the fighting men of Dan numbered 62,700 at the first census, and 64,400 at the second. See, further, the additional note at the end of the chapter.

47—54. The Levites were not to be numbered as fighting men, but were assigned other duties on the march. These duties are stated more fully in chs. iii., iv.

48. *For the Lord spake*] **And Jehovah spake.** The rendering of the R.V., which is quite inadmissible, conceals the difficulty that the command not to number the Levites follows the statement that they were not numbered. Some transposition, the extent of which is uncertain, has taken place: or perhaps *v.* 47 is a gloss.

50. *the tabernacle of the testimony*] Better *the* **dwelling**, &c. The Heb. *mishkān*, denoting the place where Jehovah's presence *dwelt* among His people, is used in the Hexateuch by P only. The rendering 'tabernacle' confuses it with *'ōhel* 'tent.' See note on i. 1.

The 'testimony' or 'witness' refers to the stone tablets of the decalogue, which were placed in the ark and were a testimony or witness

all that belongeth to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the furniture thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle. And when 51
the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down: and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death. And the children of Israel shall pitch their 52
tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, according to their hosts. But the Levites 53
shall pitch round about the tabernacle of the testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children

to the ethical character of Israel's God and the ethical character which He desired to see in His people. Similar expressions are 'the ark of the testimony' (Ex. xxv. 22), the 'tablets of the testimony' (Ex. xxxi. 18), the 'veil of the testimony' (Lev. xxiv. 3). On the significance of the various names of the Tabernacle see the writer's *Exodus*, p. lxxxvii.

51. *the stranger*] Not a 'foreigner,' but one who does not belong to the particular class mentioned in the context—here and in xviii. 4, the Levites; in iii. 10, 38, xviii. 7, the priests.

53. *that there be no wrath*] i.e. Divine judgement for the violation of the sacredness of the Tabernacle; cf. viii. 19. The Tabernacle was an outward expression of a great religious ideal—that of the dwelling of Jehovah in the midst of His people. But the religious ideal of the Jew fell short of the truth revealed in Christianity. The Jew strained every nerve to safeguard the awful unapproachableness of God, whereas the Christian knows that he can 'draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace' (Heb. iv. 16). For this purpose the Jewish writers represented the Tabernacle as surrounded by a cordon of 'clergy,' i.e. the sons of Aaron and the three Levitical families. And outside them the laity of Israel pitched their tents according to their tribes, in the positions specified in ch. ii. This arrangement is a counterpart of Ezekiel's ideal description of the assignment of land to the several tribes round the Temple which should be built when Israel was restored from exile (Ez. xlviii.).

Additional Note on the numbers of the Israelites.

An attempt has been made by Prof. Flinders Petrie (*Researches in Sinai*, pp. 207—17) to remove the difficulty by understanding the *thousands* in the figures of the census to mean 'inmates of a household or tent,' the *hundreds* only being the numbers of individuals. Reuben for example (*v.* 21) consists of 46 *thousands* or 'families,' containing in all 500 individuals. But (1) this disregards the statement that the numbers are those of fighting men only; (2) *'eleph* 'thousand,' if it is not a numeral, must at least have the same meaning as in *v.* 16, where,

of Israel: and the Levites shall keep the charge of the *P*
54 tabernacle of the testimony. Thus did the children of Israel; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did they.

though its exact force is doubtful, it clearly denotes a larger body than the inmates of a tent; (3) the suggestion multiplies enormously the difficulty of the large number of first-born.

The explanation given by Dr Orr (*The Problem of the Old Testament*, pp. 367—9) is even less successful. From the number of fighting men (603,550) he calculates the total number of males as 900,000. This is probably too small; but even with that figure none of the difficulties above mentioned disappear. He takes notice, however, of only one of these difficulties. If the males numbered 900,000, and the first-born sons 22,273 (iii. 43), every mother had over 40 sons. Against this calculation he employs two main arguments. (1) He disregards the fact that the first-born under consideration were *males*. (First-born females were never offered to God, and the passage, iii. 40—43, is concerned with those who should be offered if Levites were not substituted for them; in *vv.* 40, 43 they are explicitly described as 'first-born males.') He maintains, in spite of the text, that about half of them must have been *daughters*! (2) He suggests that the 'first-born' did not include married men with families—fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers. And he adds that some of the first-born may have died previously. Let us, for the sake of argument, admit both these possibilities, and allow for them liberally by reckoning to every single family a first-born son 'of the rising generation,' a father, a grandfather and a great-grandfather. This multiplies the first-born (in *v.* 43) by four. But the net result is still an average of more than 10 male children, and therefore more than 20 children in all, to every mother, which is a highly improbable average. As a matter of fact the admission is far too liberal. If three living first-born are reckoned to each family (and even that is a high reckoning), each contains more than 13 males, and therefore more than 26 children in all. Dr Orr further remarks that 'account still has to be taken...of polygamous marriages, or concubinage, where possibly only *the* first-born of the house was reckoned.' But this is in defiance of iii. 12, Ex. xiii. 2, where the 'first-born' is clearly defined as that which 'openeth the womb.' He refers to the law of inheritance in Dt. xxi. 15—17, but disregards the law of dedication to God, with which, as has been said above, iii. 40—43 is concerned. There is not a trace in the Old Testament of any distinction between mother and mother with respect to the dedication of her first-born son.

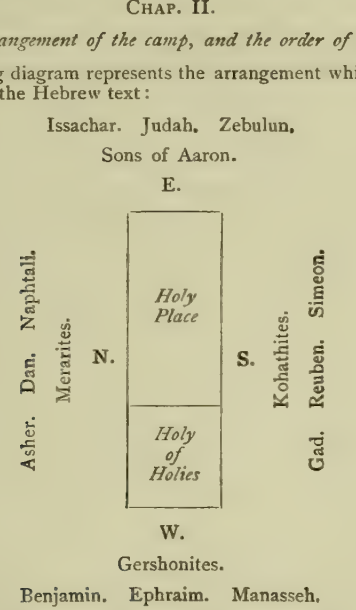
Dr Orr's treatment of the passage is an example of the straits to which writers are reduced who try to explain away at all costs the difficulties to be found in the Old Testament. It is a much wiser course frankly to acknowledge them, and to realise that it is not in the accuracy of such details as figures that the value of the Hebrew Bible lies (see **Introd. chs. IV., V.**).

P And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, 2
saying, The children of Israel shall pitch every man by his 2
own standard, with the ensigns of their fathers' houses:
over against the tent of meeting shall they pitch round

CHAP. II.

The arrangement of the camp, and the order of march.

The following diagram represents the arrangement which appears to be described in the Hebrew text:



2. Each tribe has a (?) *standard*; and each family has an ensign, or more strictly a *sign*, which may imply any kind of mark, such as a pole or spear or other object. Doughty (*Arabia Deserta*, i. 221) describes a Bedawin chief as striking his lance into the ground as a sign round which his people encamped. The meaning of the word *deghel*, rendered 'standard,' is doubtful. It perhaps denotes something *looked at* or *conspicuous* (cf. Cant. v. 10, R.V. 'chiefest'); and an Assyr. root formed of the same consonants has that meaning. And hence might be derived 'banner' (Cant. ii. 4)[1]. In the present passage some would render

[1] The verb in Ps. xx. 6 [Eng. 5] cannot be safely used as evidence; many think that the passage is corrupt.

3 about. And those that pitch on the east side toward the *P*
sunrising shall be they of the standard of the camp of
Judah, according to their hosts: and the prince of the
children of Judah shall be Nahshon the son of Amminadab.
4 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were
5 threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred. And
those that pitch next unto him shall be the tribe of Issa-
char: and the prince of the children of Issachar shall be
6 Nethanel the son of Zuar; and his host, and those that
were numbered thereof, were fifty and four thousand and
7 four hundred: *and* the tribe of Zebulun: and the prince of
the children of Zebulun shall be Eliab the son of Helon:
8 and his host, and those that were numbered thereof, were
9 fifty and seven thousand and four hundred. All that were
numbered of the camp of Judah were an hundred thousand
and fourscore thousand and six thousand and four hundred,
according to their hosts. They shall set forth first.
10 On the south side shall be the standard of the camp of
Reuben according to their hosts: and the prince of the
children of Reuben shall be Elizur the son of Shedeur.
11 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, were
12 forty and six thousand and five hundred. And those that
pitch next unto him shall be the tribe of Simeon: and the
prince of the children of Simeon shall be Shelumiel the son
13 of Zurishaddai: and his host, and those that were numbered
of them, were fifty and nine thousand and three hundred:
14 and the tribe of Gad: and the prince of the children of

it 'company' or 'battalion,' and so in *vv.* 3, 10, 18, 25. This would certainly be more suitable in *v.* 3, where the literal rendering of the Heb. is 'those that pitch...*shall be the deghel* of the camp of Judah,' and it is supported by the LXX. (τάγμα), Syriac, and Targum. If this is right, *deghel* is used with a secondary meaning. Cf. the words *maṭṭeh* and *shēbhet*, each of which can denote both a 'staff' and a 'tribe.' Cf. also the Lat. *vexillum*, a 'standard' (Tac. *Hist.* i. 32) and a 'company' belonging to a *vexillum* (*id.* i. 70).

3. *Judah*] The most important tribe in each group of three is mentioned first, and the numbers of all the three together are reckoned under its name (*vv.* 9, 16, 24, 31).

5, 7. Issachar is said to 'pitch next unto' Judah, and similarly in the other three cases. The important tribe thus appears to be placed in the centre, between the other two.

P Gad shall be Eliasaph the son of [1]Reuel: and his host, and 15
those that were numbered of them, were forty and five
thousand and six hundred and fifty. All that were num- 16
bered of the camp of Reuben were an hundred thousand
and fifty and one thousand and four hundred and fifty,
according to their hosts. And they shall set forth second.

Then the tent of meeting shall set forward, with the 17
camp of the Levites in the midst of the camps: as they
encamp, so shall they set forward, every man in his place,
by their standards.

On the west side shall be the standard of the camp of 18
Ephraim according to their hosts: and the prince of the
children of Ephraim shall be Elishama the son of Ammihud.
And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were 19
forty thousand and five hundred. And next unto him shall 20
be the tribe of Manasseh: and the prince of the children of
Manasseh shall be Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur: and his 21
host, and those that were numbered of them, were thirty
and two thousand and two hundred: and the tribe of 22
Benjamin: and the prince of the children of Benjamin
shall be Abidan the son of Gideoni: and his host, and 23
those that were numbered of them, were thirty and five
thousand and four hundred. All that were numbered of 24
the camp of Ephraim were an hundred thousand and eight
thousand and an hundred, according to their hosts. And
they shall set forth third.

On the north side shall be the standard of the camp of 25
Dan according to their hosts: and the prince of the children
of Dan shall be Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. And his 26
host, and those that were numbered of them, were three-

[1] In ch. i. 14, *Deuel*

17. *in the midst of the camps*] This appears to mean in the centre of the line of march. The tribes on the east and south sides start first and second. Then follows the Tabernacle with all its parts and accessories, the Levites who carry it forming a hollow square. After them follow the tribes on the west and north sides. The Levitical families retain the respective positions which they occupy when encamped. In the present order of the text, these positions are not described till iii. 23, 29, 35, 38. A different priestly tradition as to the order of march is given in x. 17—21.

27 score and two thousand and seven hundred. And those *P*
that pitch next unto him shall be the tribe of Asher: and
the prince of the children of Asher shall be Pagiel the son
28 of Ochran: and his host, and those that were numbered of
them, were forty and one thousand and five hundred: and
29 the tribe of Naphtali: and the prince of the children of
30 Naphtali shall be Ahira the son of Enan: and his host, and
those that were numbered of them, were fifty and three
31 thousand and four hundred. All that were numbered of
the camp of Dan were an hundred thousand and fifty and
seven thousand and six hundred. They shall set forth
hindmost by their standards.

32 These are they that were numbered of the children of
Israel by their fathers' houses: all that were numbered of
the camps according to their hosts were six hundred thou-
33 sand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty. But
the Levites were not numbered among the children of
34 Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses. Thus did the
children of Israel; according to all that the LORD com-
manded Moses, so they pitched by their standards, and so
they set forward, every one by their families, according to
their fathers' houses.

3 Now these are the generations of Aaron and Moses in

CHAP. III.

The sons of Aaron and the Levitical families.

The contents of the chapter are as follows: *vv.* 1—4. The 'generations' of Aaron. *vv.* 5—10. The appointment of the Levites to be servants of the priests. *vv.* 11—13. The Levites are a substitute for the first-born which God consecrated to Himself at the Exodus. *vv.* 14—20. A summary of the Levitical families and their subdivisions. *vv.* 21—39. The several duties of the three Levitical families on the march. *vv.* 40—51. The substitution of the Levites for the first-born, the surplus of the first-born being redeemed by money.

1—4. The generations of Aaron.

1. *these are the generations*] A formula occurring several times in P; Gen. v. 1, vi. 9, x. 1, xi. 10, 27, xxv. 12, 19, xxxvi. 1, 9, xxxvii. 2. It marks a fresh start in the history. 'Generations,' lit. origins, means 'an account of a man and his genealogical descendants.'

Aaron and Moses] The two most important representatives of the tribe of Levi. Moses is usually mentioned first, but here Aaron has the precedence because the passage deals with his descendants only.

P the day that the LORD spake with Moses in mount Sinai.
And these are the names of the sons of Aaron; Nadab the 2
firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. These are the 3
names of the sons of Aaron, the priests which were anointed,
whom he consecrated to minister in the priest's office. And 4
Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered
strange fire before the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai, and
they had no children: and Eleazar and Ithamar ministered
in the priest's office in the presence of Aaron their father.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Bring the 5, 6
tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest,
that they may minister unto him. And they shall keep his 7
charge, and the charge of the whole congregation before the
tent of meeting, to do the service of the tabernacle. And 8
they shall keep all the furniture of the tent of meeting, and
the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the
tabernacle. And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron 9

in the day, &c.] The words are attached very loosely to the context, and describe the point of time at which the new development—the organization of the tribe of Levi—begins.

3. *the priests which were anointed*] Many passages of P speak of the High Priest alone as being anointed to his office; cf. Ex. xxix. 7, 29, Lev. viii. 12. The anointing of all priests was a later development; cf. Ex. xxviii. 41, xxx. 30, xl. 15.

4. The incident here referred to is related in Lev. x. 1—7. The meaning of 'strange fire' is uncertain. Either the incense which they burnt was not made in accordance with the divine prescription (given in Ex. xxx. 34—38), or the fire was not taken from the proper place—the altar of burnt-offering. 'Strange' means 'not in accordance with the regular ritual'; see n. on i. 51.

they had no children] The point of this lies in the fact that after the exile all the priestly families called themselves 'sons of Aaron,' and traced their descent through Eleazar or Ithamar (see p. xvi).

5—10. The appointment of the Levites as an inferior, though sacred, body of priests' servants.

6. *minister unto him*] i.e. unto all the priests, whom Aaron represented.

7. *keep his charge*] i.e. perform the duties of their service to him and to the priests.

the charge of the whole congregation] comprised the ritual functions in connexion with the offering of animals sacrificed by and in behalf of the laity of Israel.

and to his sons: they are [1]wholly given unto him [2]on the *P*
10 behalf of the children of Israel. And thou shalt [3]appoint
Aaron and his sons, and they shall keep their priesthood:
and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.
11 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, And I, behold,
12 I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel
instead of all the firstborn that openeth the womb among
13 the children of Israel; and the Levites shall be mine: for
all the firstborn are mine; on the day that I smote all the
firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the

[1] Heb. *given, given* [2] Or, *from* [3] Or, *number*

9. *wholly given unto him*] i.e. to Aaron. In viii. 16—19, it is explained that they are first given to *Jehovah*, and by Him given to the priests; cf. xviii. 6. In the present passage LXX. and Sam. read *unto me*, which is possibly correct. The Heb. rendered 'wholly given' is *nethūnīm nethūnīm* i.e. 'given, given.' In the time of Ezra there was a class of temple slaves inferior to the Levites, and mostly foreigners, who were known as *the Nethinim*, meaning 'the given.' It seems probable that at a later time these slaves rose in status and importance, and became identified with the Levites. And the passages which speak of the Levites as 'given' are an attempt to supply an origin for the name. See art. 'Nethinim' in Hastings' *DB*. iii. 519. Ryle, *Comm. on Ezra and Neh.*, p. 28.

on the behalf of] Lit. as marg. 'from.' The Israelites handed over to the priests a whole tribe from among their number.

10. *keep their priesthood*] i.e. perform the duties of their priesthood. LXX. adds 'and everything about the altar and within the veil'; cf. xviii. 7.

cometh nigh] approaches the sanctuary to perform a priestly office.

11—13. The Levites substituted for the first-born.

12. All male first-born of men and animals are sacred to God, i.e. they must be sacrificed. In very primitive ages it is probable that this custom actually prevailed (cf. Gen. xxii., 2 K. iii. 27, Mic. vi. 7), but the Israelite practice of redeeming human first-born by an equivalent in money or animals must have arisen at an early date. The practice of offering the firstborn is enjoined in JE (Ex. xxii. 29 (E), xiii. 11—13[1], xxxiv. 19 f. (J)), Num. xviii. 15 f. (P), and the redemption (in P) is to be by a money payment. But at this point, in P, a different form of redemption is commanded, i.e. the handing over of the Levites for service. This subject is resumed in *vv.* 40—51, where it is explained that the Levites were substituted only for those firstborn who were more than a month old at the time.

13. *on the day*, &c.] A reference to Ex. xiii. 1 f. (P).

[1] J, however, differs from P in dating the offering of first-born not from the Exodus but from the entrance into Canaan.

P firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine they shall be; I am the LORD.

And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of 14
Sinai, saying, Number the children of Levi by their fathers' 15
houses, by their families: every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them. And Moses numbered 16
them according to the word of the LORD, as he was commanded. And these were the sons of Levi by their names; 17
Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari. And these are the 18
names of the sons of Gershon by their families; Libni and Shimei. And the sons of Kohath by their families; Am- 19
ram, and Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. And the sons of 20
Merari by their families; Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to their fathers' houses.

Of Gershon was the family of the Libnites, and the 21
family of the Shimeites: these are the families of the Gershonites. Those that were numbered of them, accord- 22
ing to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, even those that were numbered of them were seven thousand and five hundred. The families of the Gershonites 23
shall pitch behind the tabernacle westward. And the prince 24

I am **Jehovah**] A solemn formula emphasizing the importance of a command or statement. It occurs occasionally in P (i.e. *v.* 41, Ex. vi. 8, xii. 12), but is specially characteristic of the 'Holiness' laws in Lev. xvii.—xxvi. See Chapman, *Introd.* p. 112.

14—20. Summary of the Levitical families.

15. *from a month old*] to correspond with the firstborn (see *v.* 40).

17. The three sons of Levi are found only in P and the books of Chronicles, the latter being a priestly composition. To them were traced the three main divisions of the Levites in Jerusalem after the exile.

21—39. The Levitical families and their duties.

Notice that *narrative* in *vv.* 21 f., 27 f., 33 f., 39 alternates with *commands* in *vv.* 23—26, 29—32, 35—38. It is one of the many indications that the priestly portions of the book were the composite work of more than one writer.

23. *behind*] The usual expression for 'westward,' because the Hebrew faced eastward when thinking of the points of the compass; cf. Ex. iii. 1, Dt. xi. 30, Jud. xviii. 12, Is. ix. 12. With the characteristic tautology of the priestly style another word for 'westward' is added; cf. *v.* 38, Ex. xxvii. 9. The latter denotes literally 'towards the sea,' shewing that the narrator was in Palestine when he wrote, the Mediterranean being the sea referred to.

of the fathers' house of the Gershonites shall be Eliasaph *P*
25 the son of Lael. And the charge of the sons of Gershon in
the tent of meeting shall be the tabernacle, and the Tent,
the covering thereof, and the screen for the door of the tent
26 of meeting, and the hangings of the court, and the screen
for the door of the court, which is by the tabernacle, and by
the altar round about, and the cords of it for all the service
thereof.
27 And of Kohath was the family of the Amramites, and
the family of the Izharites, and the family of the Hebronites,
and the family of the Uzzielites: these are the families of
28 the Kohathites. According to the number of all the males,
from a month old and upward, there were eight thousand
29 and six hundred, keeping the charge of the sanctuary. The
families of the sons of Kohath shall pitch on the side of the
30 tabernacle southward. And the prince of the fathers' house
of the families of the Kohathites shall be Elizaphan the son

25. *the tabernacle; the Tent; the covering*] Since the wooden framework is to be carried by the Merarites, these three expressions denote only the stuff hangings; cf. iv. 25. An explanation of the terms is found in Ex. xxvi. 1—14. As an ordinary tent consists mainly of the covering, the wood-work being only an accessory to support it, so (*1*) the *tabernacle* (or rather **dwelling**) proper consisted of ten strips of linen worked in three colours with figures of cherubim, and joined by hooks and loops into one whole (*vv.* 1, 6ᵇ). (2) The *tent*[1] consisted of eleven strips of goats' hair, joined together in the same way, and covering the 'dwelling' (*vv.* 7, 11ᵇ, 13ᵇ). (3) The *covering* was of rams' skins dyed red (probably tanned) and of the water-tight skin of some marine animal such as the porpoise or dugong (*v.* 14).

26. *the court, which is by the tabernacle, and by the altar*] i.e. the court which encloses the dwelling and the altar of burnt-offering.

the cords of it] Cords are also assigned to the Merarites for transport (*v.* 37). If the repetition is not merely an oversight of the narrator, it is just possible to understand the cords in the present verse to be those by which the outer covering of the dwelling was fastened down, and those in *v.* 37 to be the cords by which the hangings of the court were kept taut.

28. *eight thousand and six hundred*] This should probably be read *eight thousand and* **three** *hundred* (שלש for ששׁ); *v.* 39, and a comparison of *v.* 43 with *v.* 46, shew that the Levites numbered 22,000, whereas the figures given in *vv.* 22, 28, 34 make a total of 22,300.

[1] The spelling of the word in the R.V. with a capital T is misleading.

of Uzziel. And their charge shall be the ark, and the table, 31
and the candlestick, and the altars, and the vessels of the
sanctuary wherewith they minister, and the screen, and all
the service thereof. And Eleazar the son of Aaron the 32
priest shall be prince of the princes of the Levites, *and*
have the oversight of them that keep the charge of the
sanctuary.

Of Merari was the family of the Mahlites, and the family 33
of the Mushites: these are the families of Merari. And 34
those that were numbered of them, according to the number
of all the males, from a month old and upward, were six
thousand and two hundred. And the prince of the fathers' 35
house of the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of
Abihail: they shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle
northward. And [1]the appointed charge of the sons of 36
Merari shall be the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars
thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the sockets thereof, and
all the instruments thereof, and all the service thereof; and 37
the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and
their pins, and their cords. And those that pitch before 38
the tabernacle eastward, before the tent of meeting toward
the sunrising, shall be Moses, and Aaron and his sons, keeping the charge of the sanctuary [2]for the charge of the
children of Israel; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall

[1] Heb. *the office of the charge* [2] Or, *even*

31. For the ark, table, and candlestick (better **lampstand**), see Ex. xxv., and for the two altars, Ex. xxvii. 1—8, xxx. 1—10.

the screen] The door-hangings of the tabernacle and of the court have been assigned to the Gershonites (*vv.* 25 f.). This is therefore the veil which separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. But it is nowhere else called simply 'the screen.' We should probably read (with the Syr.) **the veil of the screen,** i.e. the veil which acts as a screen, as in iv. 5, Ex. xl. 3, 21.

32. Eleazar was himself a Kohathite through his father Aaron and his grandfather Amram (Ex. vi. 18, 20, 23).

36, 37. See Ex. xxvi. 15—30, xxvii. 10—19.

38. *Moses*] The mention of his name in a command given to him is strange. It would be still stranger if he were the writer of the passage.

the charge] i.e. that which has to be attended to.

for the charge of the children of Israel] An idiomatic use of 'for' confined to late writings. It is virtually equivalent to 'and.' (Cf. *v.* 26

39 be put to death. All that were numbered of the Levites, *P*
which Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of
the LORD, by their families, all the males from a month old
and upward, were twenty and two thousand.
40 And the LORD said unto Moses, Number all the first-
born males of the children of Israel from a month old and
41 upward, and take the number of their names. And thou
shalt take the Levites for me (I am the LORD) instead of
all the firstborn among the children of Israel; and the cattle
of the Levites instead of all the firstlings among the cattle
42 of the children of Israel. And Moses numbered, as the
LORD commanded him, all the firstborn among the children
43 of Israel. And all the firstborn males according to the
number of names, from a month old and upward, of those
that were numbered of them, were twenty and two thousand
two hundred and threescore and thirteen.
44 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the
45 Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of
Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of their cattle:
46 and the Levites shall be mine; I am the LORD. And for
[1]the redemption of the two hundred and threescore and
thirteen of the firstborn of the children of Israel, which are
47 over and above *the number of* the Levites, thou shalt take
five shekels apiece by the poll; after the shekel of the
sanctuary shalt thou take them (the shekel is twenty gerahs):

[1] Or, *those that are to be redeemed, the &c.*

'*for* all the service' with *vv.* 31, 36 '*and* all the service.') That which had to be attended to for the laity was the offering of sacrifice on the altar in the court.

40—51. The substitution of the Levites for the first-born.

41. *instead of all the firstlings among the cattle*] This is inconsistent with xviii. 17 which enjoins that the firstlings of such cattle as are suitable for sacrifice may not be redeemed. The difficulty has been explained by supposing that the reference is to animals not suitable for sacrifice. But it is more probable that the present command dates from a later time when commands such as xviii. 17 were found impracticable.

46, 47. The Levites number 22,000, but the first-born 22,273. The remaining 273 must therefore be redeemed by a payment of five shekels for each.

47. *the shekel of the sanctuary*] Perhaps better *the* **sacred shekel**. This was the ancient Hebrew-Phoenician shekel. At the time of the

P and thou shalt give the money wherewith the odd number 48
of them is redeemed unto Aaron and to his sons. And 49
Moses took the redemption-money from them that were
over and above them that were redeemed by the Levites:
from the firstborn of the children of Israel took he the 50
money; a thousand three hundred and threescore and five
shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary: and Moses gave 51
[1] the redemption-money unto Aaron and to his sons, accord-
ing to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded
Moses.

And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, 4
saying, Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among 2
the sons of Levi, by their families, by their fathers' houses,
from thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, 3

[1] Or, *the money of them that were redeemed*

writer the official coinage for secular purposes was the Persian-Babylonian, in which the shekel was some 28 grs. heavier. The Hebrew silver shekel used for sacred purposes weighed about 224·6 grs. Its actual value can be roughly estimated from the fact that in our Lord's time the *denarius* paid to a labourer for a day's work (Mat. xx. 2) weighed 60 grs.

the shekel is twenty gerahs] The parenthetical explanation was needful to distinguish between the sacred and the official coinage. The *gērāh* was equivalent to the Greek *obolus* (which is the rendering in the LXX.), and weighed 11·23 grs. A good account of the Hebrew coinage will be found in Hastings' *DB.* iii., art. 'Money.'

CHAP. IV.

A second account of the Levitical census, and the duties of the three families.

In iii. 22, 28, 34 the numbers of the Levites have already been ascertained, but in iv. 2, 22, 29 Moses is commanded to number those who are of age for service. Chs. iii. and iv. may be the work of different writers; and the greater elaboration of detail in iv. suggests that it is the later of the two.

1—20. The Kohathites and their duties.

3. The period of active service for the Levites is here laid down as between 30—50 years of age. But in viii. 23—26 it is between 25—50, though certain duties might be performed after that age. And in 1 Ch. xxiii. 24, 27, 2 Ch. xxxi. 17, Ezr. iii. 8 it begins at 20, and there is no upward limit of age. The statements appear to represent the customs that were current at three different periods.

all that enter upon the [1]service, to do the work in the tent *P*
4 of meeting. This is the [2]service of the sons of Kohath in
5 the tent of meeting, *about* the most holy things: when the
camp setteth forward, Aaron shall go in, and his sons, and
they shall take down the veil of the screen, and cover the
6 ark of the testimony with it: and shall put thereon a cover-
ing of sealskin, and shall spread over it a cloth all of blue,

[1] Heb. *warfare*, or, *host* (and so in vv. 35, 39, 43) [2] Or, *work*

the service] This unusual meaning of the word which generally denotes 'warfare' or 'host' (R.V. marg.) is found again five times in this chapter (*vv.* 23, 30, 35, 39, 43), and elsewhere only in viii. 24 f., and of women in two very late passages, Ex. xxxviii. 8, 1 Sam. ii. 22. It perhaps implies that the Levites formed an organized body appointed for God's work under the command of superior officials, as were the rest of Israel who were numbered for war.

4. *the most holy things*] The furniture and utensils of the Dwelling, enumerated in *vv.* 5—14. The 'service of the sons of Kohath' is not stated till *v.* 15b. Before they could perform their duty of carrying the sacred objects the priests must cover them up, that the Levites may neither touch (*v.* 15) nor see them (*v.* 20).

5—14. When finally ready for the march the burden of the Kohathites would be seen simply as six large packages as follows.—(i) The *Ark* (*vv.* 5 f.), covered with the 'veil of the screen' (see on iii. 31), and a water-proof covering of dugong skin, and over this a **violet** cloth. It was carried by the staves, or **poles**, with which it was furnished for the purpose of transport (Ex. xxv. 14). The Ark is the only piece of furniture that has a coloured cloth over the water-proof covering; this would make it a conspicuous object on the march. (ii) The *Table of the Presence Bread* (*vv.* 7 f., see note), covered with a violet cloth upon which all the utensils and the loaves are placed, and the whole covered with a **scarlet** cloth, and that with the dugong skin; like the Ark it was carried by poles. (iii) The *Lampstand* and all its utensils (*vv.* 9 f.), covered with violet cloth and dugong skin, and carried by means of a bar. (iv) The *Golden Altar of Incense* (*v.* 11), covered with violet cloth and dugong skin and carried by its poles. (v) The *miscellaneous utensils* (*v.* 12) not actually belonging to any piece of furniture, covered with violet cloth and dugong skin and carried by means of a bar. (vi) The *Altar of Burnt-offering* (*vv.* 13 f.), covered with a **crimson** cloth upon which all the utensils belonging to it are placed, and the whole covered with dugong skin and carried by its poles.

The reason for the additional scarlet cloth over the Table is unknown. The use of cloth of a different colour in the case of the Altar of Burnt-offering may have been because the Altar belonged to a lower grade of sanctity since it stood outside the Dwelling. For a description of the various articles see notes on Ex. xxv., xxvii. 1—8, xxx. 1—5.

P and shall put in the staves thereof. And upon the table of 7
shewbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon
the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and the cups to
pour out withal: and the continual bread shall be thereon:
and they shall spread upon them a cloth of scarlet, and 8
cover the same with a covering of sealskin, and shall put in
the staves thereof. And they shall take a cloth of blue, and 9
cover the candlestick of the light, and its lamps, and its
tongs, and its snuffdishes, and all the oil vessels thereof,
wherewith they minister unto it: and they shall put it and 10
all the vessels thereof within a covering of sealskin, and
shall put it upon [1]the frame. And upon the golden altar 11
they shall spread a cloth of blue, and cover it with a covering
of sealskin, and shall put in the staves thereof: and they 12
shall take all the vessels of ministry, wherewith they minister
in the sanctuary, and put them in a cloth of blue, and cover
them with a covering of sealskin, and shall put them on the
frame. And they shall take away the ashes from the altar, 13
and spread a purple cloth thereon: and they shall put upon 14
it all the vessels thereof, wherewith they minister about it,
the firepans, the fleshhooks, and the shovels, and the basons,
all the vessels of the altar; and they shall spread upon it a
covering of sealskin, and put in the staves thereof. And 15
when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the

[1] Or, *a bar*

7. *shewbread*] **Presence-bread**, i.e. bread that is placed in the divine Presence. 1 S. xxi. 6 is evidence that the practice was observed in early times. It was probably a relic of the primitive heathen notion that gods actually partook of bread that was offered to them.

the continual bread] The expression is not found elsewhere. Cf. 'continual meal-offering' (*v.* 16, Neh. x. 33 only), 'continual [R.V. perpetual] incense' (Ex. xxx. 8 (P)), and frequently 'continual burnt offering' (Num. xxviii., xxix.). It connotes the regularity with which a ritual act is performed at stated intervals.

The bread also came to be known as *pile bread* (R.V. 'shewbread,' 1 Ch. ix. 32, xxiii. 29, Neh. x. 33) owing to the arrangement of the loaves in two piles (Lev. xxiv. 6, R.V. marg.). And since the root of the word מַעֲרֶכֶת ('pile') denotes to 'set out' or 'arrange' [a meal], the name appears in the N.T. as ἄρτοι τῆς προθέσεως (lit. 'bread of the setting out,' Mt. xii. 4, Mk. ii. 26, Lk. vi. 4) and ἡ πρόθεσις τῶν ἄρτων (lit. 'the setting out of the loaves,' Heb. ix. 2).

sanctuary, and all the furniture of the sanctuary, as the *P*
camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall
come to bear it: but they shall not touch the [1]sanctuary,
lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons
16 of Kohath in the tent of meeting. And the charge of
Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest shall be the oil for the
light, and the sweet incense, and the continual meal offering,
and the anointing oil, the charge of all the tabernacle, and
of all that therein is, the sanctuary, and the furniture
thereof.
17 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron,
18 saying, Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the
19 Kohathites from among the Levites: but thus do unto
them, that they may live, and not die, when they approach
unto the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go
in, and appoint them every one to his service and to his
20 burden: but they shall not go in to see the [1]sanctuary even
21 for a moment, lest they die.
22 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the sum
23 of the sons of Gershon also, by their fathers' houses, by
their families; from thirty years old and upward until fifty
years old shalt thou number them; all that enter in to [2]wait
24 upon the service, to do the work in the tent of meeting.
25 This is the service of the families of the Gershonites, in
serving and in bearing burdens: they shall bear the curtains
of the tabernacle, and the tent of meeting, its covering, and
the covering of sealskin that is above upon it, and the
26 screen for the door of the tent of meeting; and the hangings

[1] Or, *holy things* [2] Heb. *war the warfare*

15. *they shall not touch the sanctuary*] Better *the* **holy things**, as in R.V. marg. The Heb. word is strictly a singular abstract substantive, 'the sacredness,' which is here employed to denote the whole collection of sacred objects.

16. Eleazar superintends the Kohathites, and has personal charge of the oil for the light (Ex. xxvii. 20), the 'incense of sweet spices' (Ex. xxv. 6, xxx. 34—38), the 'continual meal-offering,' and the anointing oil (Ex. xxx. 22—33).

21—28. The Gershonites and their duties.

They carry (in wagons vii. 7) all the hangings and coverings of which the Dwelling and the court are composed.

of the court, and the screen for the door of the gate of the court, which is by the tabernacle and by the altar round about, and their cords, and all the instruments of their service, and whatsoever shall be done with them, therein shall they serve. At the commandment of Aaron and his 27
sons shall be all the service of the sons of the Gershonites, in all their burden, and in all their service: and ye shall appoint unto them in charge all their burden. This is the 28
service of the families of the sons of the Gershonites in the tent of meeting: and their charge shall be under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

As for the sons of Merari, thou shalt number them by 29
their families, by their fathers' houses; from thirty years old 30
and upward even unto fifty years old shalt thou number them, every one that entereth upon the service, to do the work of the tent of meeting. And this is the charge of 31
their burden, according to all their service in the tent of meeting; the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the sockets thereof; and the 32
pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords, with all their instruments, and with all their service: and by name ye shall [1]appoint the instruments of the charge of their burden. This is the service of the 33
families of the sons of Merari, according to all their service,

[1] Or, *number*

26. *whatsoever shall be done with them*] **all that may have to be done with regard to them**; e.g. the undoing of the hooks and loops, the rolling up of the strips of curtain and so on.

27. *ye shall appoint*] The subject is apparently Moses and Aaron. LXX. (perhaps rightly) has a singular verb referring to Moses alone.

in charge] Perhaps, with LXX., read **by name** (בְּשֵׁמוֹת for בְּמִשְׁמֶרֶת) as in *v.* 32.

28. Ithamar superintends both the Gershonites and the Merarites (*v.* 33).

29—33. The Merarites and their duties.

They carry (in wagons vii. 8) the wooden framework of the Dwelling, and everything else of wood—bars, pillars and pins (or rather **pegs**)—the silver **bases** (R.V. 'sockets') of the framework and the bronze bases of the pillars of the court.

32. *the instruments of the charge of their burden*] **i.e.** *the* **articles committed to their charge to carry.**

in the tent of meeting, under the hand of Ithamar the son of *P*
Aaron the priest.

34 And Moses and Aaron and the princes of the congrega-
tion numbered the sons of the Kohathites by their families,
35 and by their fathers' houses, from thirty years old and
upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entered
36 upon the service, for work in the tent of meeting: and those
that were numbered of them by their families were two
37 thousand seven hundred and fifty. These are they that
were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all that
did serve in the tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron
numbered according to the commandment of the LORD by
the hand of Moses.

38 And those that were numbered of the sons of Gershon,
39 by their families, and by their fathers' houses, from thirty
years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one
that entered upon the service, for work in the tent of meet-
40 ing, even those that were numbered of them, by their
families, by their fathers' houses, were two thousand and six
41 hundred and thirty. These are they that were numbered of
the families of the sons of Gershon, all that did serve in the
tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron numbered accord-
ing to the commandment of the LORD.

42 And those that were numbered of the families of the
sons of Merari, by their families, by their fathers' houses,
43 from thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old,
every one that entered upon the service, for work in the tent
44 of meeting, even those that were numbered of them by their
45 families, were three thousand and two hundred. These are
they that were numbered of the families of the sons of
Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the
commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

46 All those that were numbered of the Levites, whom
Moses and Aaron and the princes of Israel numbered, by
47 their families, and by their fathers' houses, from thirty years
old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that

34—49. A detailed statement that Moses and Aaron numbered the men between the ages of 30 and 50 in the three Levitical families, as had been commanded.

P entered in to do the work of service, and the work of bearing burdens in the tent of meeting, even those that were numbered of them, were eight thousand and five hundred and fourscore. According to the commandment of the LORD they were numbered by the hand of Moses, every one according to his service, and [1]according to his burden: thus were they numbered of him, as the LORD commanded Moses.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that hath an issue, and whosoever is unclean by the dead: both male and female shall ye put out, without the camp shall ye put them; that they defile not their camp, in the midst whereof I dwell. And the children of Israel did so, and put them out without the

[1] Or, *according to his burden and his duty, as &c.*

49. *thus were they numbered of him, as* &c.] This is a paraphrase which gives the required sense. The Heb. is corrupt, but the LXX. reads **and they were numbered, as** &c.[1]

CHAP. V.

The preceding chapters are mainly concerned with the Levites, and are more or less connected by a unity of subject. But this and the following chapter contain a miscellaneous collection of regulations on a variety of matters, belonging, in all probability, to different *strata* of priestly tradition. *vv.* 1—4. Unclean persons to be excluded from the camp. *vv.* 5—10. Payments in compensation for wrongs. *vv.* 11—31. The Ordeal of Jealousy.

1—4. Exclusion of unclean persons. The compiler has very suitably placed this in connexion with the careful arrangements enjoined in the preceding chapter to preserve the sacredness of the Dwelling of Jehovah. Because of His presence the whole camp ('in the midst whereof I dwell') was sacred, and all pollution must be rigorously avoided (cf. Lev. xv. 31). The same principle is applied, in Num. xxxv. 33 f., to the whole land of Canaan.

2. Three forms of uncleanness are here mentioned, all of which are dealt with in detail elsewhere, and all are considered contagious in their ceremonial pollution:—leprosy (Lev. xiii.), discharges (Lev. xv.), and contact with the dead (Num. xix.).

[1] Apparently וַיִּפָּקְדוּ אֲשֶׁר for וַיִּפְקְדוּ בַּאֲשֶׁר.

camp: as the LORD spake unto Moses, so did the children *P*
of Israel.
5 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
6 the children of Israel, When a man or woman shall commit
any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the
7 LORD, and that soul be guilty; then they shall confess their
sin which they have done: and he shall make restitution
for his guilt in full, and add unto it the fifth part thereof,
and give it unto him in respect of whom he hath been
8 guilty. But if the man have no kinsman to whom restitu-

5—10. Payments in compensation for wrongs.

Part of this section (*vv.* 6—8) is supplementary to the regulations in Lev. vi. 1—7. It is there laid down that if anyone incur guilt through wronging his neighbour by robbery, or oppression, by appropriating something committed to his keeping as a deposit, or by concealing the fact that he has found lost property, he must confess, and restore the property *plus* one-fifth, and offer to God as an atonement for his sin a guilt-offering of a ram. It is, to use a modern phrase, 'conscience money.' In the present passage it is further provided that if the neighbour whom he has wronged be dead, and there be no *gō'ēl* (see note below) to whom the property can be restored, it is to be paid to the priest. The ram of the guilt-offering is, of course, to be offered as well.

6. *to do a trespass against the Lord*] **in acting unfaithfully towards Jehovah.** To sin against one's fellow men involves breaking faith with God; cf. Lev. vi. 2.

7. *make restitution for his guilt*] lit. 'restore his guilt,' abstract for concrete; *he shall* **restore that which he guiltily holds in possession;** and similarly in *v.* 8.

the fifth part] The same compensation is enjoined in other cases—the eating of sacred food unwittingly (Lev. xxii. 14), the redemption of an unclean animal that has been vowed (Lev. xxvii. 11—13), or that is a firstling (*id.* 27), and the redemption of tithe (*id.* 31).

8. The verse deals with the case in which the injured person dies before restitution has been made to him, and leaves no representative.

kinsman] Heb. *gō'ēl.* A technical term of considerable importance in Israelite law. A man's next of kin was (1) a full brother, (2) failing him, an uncle on the father's side, (3) failing him, a first cousin on the father's side, (4) failing him, any near kinsman. His duties were manifold. *In civil law:* (*a*) to buy back the family estate of his kinsman, which the latter had sold through poverty (Lev. xxv. 25, Ruth iv. 1—6). He also had the refusal of it before it was sold (Jer. xxxii. 8—12). (*b*) To buy back the person of his kinsman, if the latter had sold himself as a slave through poverty (Lev. xxv. 47 ff.). In both these cases his action may be denoted by the word 'redeem.'

*P*tion may be made for the guilt, the restitution for guilt which is made unto the LORD shall be the priest's; besides the ram of the atonement, whereby atonement shall be made for him. And every heave offering of all the holy 9
things of the children of Israel, which they present unto the priest, shall be his. And every man's hallowed things 10
shall be his: whatsoever any man giveth the priest, it shall be his.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto 11 12
the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man's wife go aside, and commit a trespass against him, and a 13
man lie with her carnally, and it be hid from the eyes of

(*c*) To receive restitution due to his deceased kinsman (here). *In criminal law:* to claim satisfaction for the blood of his murdered kinsman, in which case he was known as the *gō'ēl haddām*, 'avenger of blood.'

unto the Lord shall be the priest's] lit. 'shall be *for Jehovah for the priest.*' The priest shall receive it as the representative of Jehovah.

the ram of the atonement] The guilt-offering described in Lev. vi. 6.

9. *every heave-offering*] *every* **contribution.** The Heb. *terūmāh* is derived from a root signifying 'to lift up, *or* off,' and denotes that which is lifted off from a larger mass, and separated or contributed for sacred purposes. LXX. in the Pentateuch renders it by *ἀφαίρεμα*. It is used of gifts taken from the produce of the earth (xv. 19—21 (P), Dt. xii. 6, 11), of money, spoils, &c. dedicated to Jehovah (Num. xxxi. 29, 41, 52), of the Levites' tithe (xviii. 24), of the priests' share of the tithe (xviii. 26—29), of materials for the Tabernacle (Ex. xxv. 2 f., xxxv. 5, 21, 24) and for the second temple (Ezr. viii. 25), of the half shekel for defraying the expenses of the Tabernacle services (Ex. xxx. 13 ff.), and even of land reserved for the priests and Levites (Ez. xlv. 1, 6, &c.). As applied to animal sacrifices, the term is employed only of the shoulder of the peace-offering (vi. 20, Ex. xxix. 27, Lev. vii. 34, x. 14 f.). See Driver's article 'Offer' in Hastings' *DB.* iii. 588.

10. *every man's* **holy** *things shall be his*] i.e. the priest's. The verse gives a general description of all priestly dues; (1) every holy thing that is, from any cause, due to Jehovah, shall go to the priest as His representative, and (2) every gift which a man may make to any particular priest shall belong to that priest.

11—31. The Ordeal of Jealousy.

Though in its present form a late priestly composition this section is evidently based upon very ancient material. Its contents find no parallel in the other Pentateuchal codes; but the custom of trial by ordeal was a very ancient feature in Israelite life, as it was in the life of many other nations, and it still has a wide prevalence, especially in Africa. The forms of ordeal differ greatly—drinking a potion (as here), being

her husband, and be kept close, and she be defiled, and *P*
there be no witness against her, neither she be taken in the
14 act; and the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be
jealous of his wife, and she be defiled: or if the spirit
of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife,
15 and she be not defiled: then shall the man bring his wife
unto the priest, and shall bring her oblation for her, the
tenth part of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil

thrown into water (as in the case of suspected witches in the middle ages in Europe), walking upon heated metal, or holding it in the hand, or very frequently invoking upon oneself a curse which will come true in the event of guilt. The latter, as well as the potion, forms part of the ordeal in the present passage[1]. Another Biblical instance of an ordeal appears in the story of Korah (Num. xvi. 16—18), and the practice perhaps underlies Ps. cix. 18, Prov. vi. 27 f. The essential element in all cases is that the accused is subjected to a test, the visible results of which will be a conclusive divine sentence of innocence or guilt.

In the present instance a woman is suspected of adultery which cannot be legally proved, and her husband's jealousy is roused. He brings her to the priest with an accompanying offering of flour. The priest places her 'before Jehovah,' and after dictating a curse upon herself which the woman endorses by responding 'Amen, Amen,' he causes her to drink a potion, consisting of holy water with two added ingredients—dust from the floor of the Tabernacle, and the written words of the curse which have been washed off into the water. If she is guilty of the charge, the potion will have a harmful effect upon her body which will prevent her being delivered of a child, but if she is innocent it will do her no harm and she will conceive seed.

13. *and be kept close* &c.] *and* **she be undetected, though she has defiled herself.**

since she was not *taken in the act*] On the evidence of two witnesses at least (Dt. xvii. 6, xix. 15) the woman and the man would be put to death (Lev. xx. 10 (P), Dt. xxii. 22); cf. John viii. 4 f.

14b. The merest suspicion on the husband's part might render her liable to the ordeal.

15. *the tenth part of an ephah*] A little under 7 pints. An *ephah* was a dry measure equivalent to the liquid measure *bath*; both were equal to $\frac{1}{10}$th *homer*. See Is. v. 10.

barley meal] The coarsest farinaceous food, ordinarily used by the poorer classes (Jud. vii. 13, Jn. vi. 9, 13), and given to animals (1 K. iv. 28). It would frequently be used as an offering in early days, but the mention of it is unique in P, which probably shews that it was an integral part of a primitive ceremony on which P's account is based. Elsewhere in P 'fine meal' is always prescribed.

[1] References to ordeals in other nations are given in Gray's *Numbers*, pp. 44 f.

P upon it, nor put frankincense thereon; for it is a meal offering of jealousy, a meal offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance. And the priest shall bring her 16
near, and set her before the LORD: and the priest shall 17
take holy water in an earthen vessel; and of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and put it into the water: and the priest shall set the woman 18
before the LORD, and let the hair of the woman's head go loose, and put the meal offering of memorial in her hands, which is the meal offering of jealousy: and the priest shall have in his hand the water of bitterness that causeth the curse: and the priest shall cause her to swear, and shall 19
say unto the woman, If no man have lien with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness, [1]being under thy husband, be thou free from this water of bitterness that causeth the curse: but if thou hast gone aside, [1]being under 20
thy husband, and if thou be defiled, and some man have lien with thee besides thine husband: then the priest 21
shall cause the woman to swear with the oath of [2]cursing, and the priest shall say unto the woman, The LORD make

[1] Or, with another *instead of thy husband.* See Ezek. xxiii. 5, Rom. vii. 2 [2] Or, *adjuration*

he shall pour no oil upon it &c.] Perhaps because symbols of joy and festivity were excluded by the grievous nature of the woman's alleged crime. Oil and frankincense were also forbidden in the case of a poor man's sin-offering (Lev. v. 11).

16. *before* Jehovah] Probably at the altar of burnt-offering; it was impossible for her to be admitted into the Tabernacle.

17. *holy water*] A unique expression. The writer may have thought that the water should be taken from the sacred laver, which, according to a late stratum of P, stood in the court. LXX., however, has ὕδωρ καθαρὸν ζῶν—'pure living water,' which suggests that in the primitive ritual 'running water' was prescribed (cf. xix. 17, Lev. xiv. 5 f.). It is possible that 'running water' was the original reading, and that it was altered by a later hand.

the dust &c.] This was sacred dust, which would increase the sacredness of the potion, and so make it more dangerous for one who was unworthy to drink it.

18. The hair is let loose as a sign of mourning for her shame.

the water of bitterness] the water which causes physical pain.

19. *being under thy husband*] i.e. under his authority; cf. Ezek. xxiii. 5 'when she was mine' (R.V.), lit. 'under me.'

thee a [1]curse and an oath among thy people, when the LORD *P*
doth make thy thigh to fall away, and thy belly to swell;
22 and this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy
bowels, and make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to fall
23 away: and the woman shall say, Amen, Amen. And the
priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot
24 them out into the water of bitterness: and he shall make
the woman drink the water of bitterness that causeth the
curse: and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into
25 her *and become* bitter. And the priest shall take the meal
offering of jealousy out of the woman's hand, and shall
wave the meal offering before the LORD, and bring it unto
26 the altar: and the priest shall take an handful of the meal
offering, as the memorial thereof, and burn it upon the altar,
27 and afterward shall make the woman drink the water. And

[1] Or, *adjuration*

23. *a book*] The Heb. term *sēpher* denotes anything which can receive writing, e.g. a strip of parchment. Here it is something from which the written words of the curse can be washed or wiped out into the water. The curse is considered to be in this manner literally conveyed to the potion. The eating of written charms is a frequent practice in Thibet and India for the cure of disease. In Egypt 'the most approved mode of charming away sickness or disease is to write certain passages of the Korān on the inner surface of an earthenware cup or bowl; then to pour in some water, and stir it until the writing is quite washed off: when the water, with the sacred words thus infused in it, is to be drunk by the patient' (Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet*, quoted by Gray, p. 54).

24. and become *bitter*] lit. 'for bitterness,' i.e. proving injurious.

25. *shall wave the meal-offering*] The word 'wave' probably does not bear its technical meaning (explained in note on vi. 20), but denotes simply to 'offer.' See viii. 11, 13, 15, 21.

26. *an handful of the meal-offering*] In accordance with the general regulation laid down in Lev. ii. 2.

as the **memorial-offering** *thereof*] The technical term *'azkārāh* is confined to P. It is used of the frankincense burned for the Presence-bread (Lev. xxiv. 7), the meal of the poor man's sin-offering (Lev. v. 11 f.), and the meal-offering (here, Lev. ii. 2, 9, 16, vi. 15). The burning of the incense or meal in each case was to bring the worshipper before God's memory. Cf. Ex. xxviii. 29.

and afterward &c.] Strictly interpreted this is a second draught which the woman is made to take. But a second draught is very improbable. There has apparently been some accidental disarrangement of the text. Notice that *v.* 27^{b} repeats the substance of *v.* 24.

P when he hath made her drink the water, then it shall come to pass, if she be defiled, and have committed a trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her *and become* bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall fall away: and the woman shall be a curse among her people. And if the woman be not 28
defiled, but be clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed. This is the law of jealousy, when a wife, 29
[1]being under her husband, goeth aside, and is defiled; or 30
when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon a man, and he be jealous over his wife; then shall he set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law. And the man shall be free from iniquity, and that woman 31
shall bear her iniquity.

6 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the 2
children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall make a special vow, the vow of [2]a Nazirite, to

[1] Or, *goeth aside* with another *instead of her husband*
[2] That is, *one separated* or *consecrated*

28. *she shall be free*] *she shall be* **acquitted**; proved innocent.
31. The husband shall be held innocent in any case, and the woman shall, if guilty, suffer the consequences of guilt.

CHAP. VI. 1—21.

The Law of the Nazirite.

The passage consists of two distinct parts: (*a*) *vv.* 1—12. Three regulations, the observance of which constituted the Naziriteship. (*b*) *vv.* 13—21. The sacrificial ceremonies to be performed at the completion of the vow.

2. *shall make a special vow*] as in xv. 3, 8, Lev. xxii. 21, xxvii. 2. The exact force of the term is not clear, but it does not seem to differ from '*make* a vow.'

a Nazirite[1]] Heb. *Nāzīr*, denotes 'one separated' (as R.V. marg.). The full form is 'a *Nazir* of God' (Jud. xiii. 5, 7), i.e. a religious devotee. Two kinds of Nazirites are mentioned in the O.T.[2], (1) those who were bound for life, (2) those who took the vow for a specified time. There is no evidence that the latter class existed before the exile. Of life-long Nazirites Samson is the clearest instance; and see Am. ii. 11 f., and perhaps 1 Sam. i. 11, Lk. i. 15. The Rechabites (Jer. xxxv. 6—10) may have been devotees of a somewhat similar type. Temporary

[1] The spelling Nazarite, of the A.V., is erroneous.
[2] See art. *Nazirite* in Hastings' *DB.* iii.

3 [1]separate himself unto the LORD: he shall separate himself *P*
from wine and strong drink; he shall drink no vinegar of
wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any
4 liquor of grapes, nor eat fresh grapes or dried. All the days
of his [2]separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the
5 grape-vine, from the kernels even to the husk. All the days

[1] Or, *consecrate* [2] Or, *consecration* Or, *Naziriteship*

Nazirites were very numerous in later Jewish history. They are probably referred to in Acts xviii. 18, xxi. 23 f. 'The Nazirites who had accomplished their days' are spoken of in 1 Mac. iii. 49. And in the Mishna, the authoritative compendium of rabbinic regulations, one section or 'tract' is called *Nazir*, and deals exclusively with the subject. The temporary vow was frequently taken for purely private and personal reasons, such as thanksgiving for recovery from illness, for the birth of a child, and so on. The present passage deals with an already established custom, and is written chiefly with the object of prescribing the offerings to be made at the conclusion of the vow.

3, 4. *First regulation.* Abstinence from intoxicating liquors and from any produce of the vine, liquid or solid.

3. *vinegar*] Prepared from wine and other intoxicants which have gone sour.

liquor of grapes] Fresh wine, as distinct from the foregoing.

or dried] Raisins compressed into a cake (*'ashīshāh*) were a common article of food (2 Sam. vi. 19, Hos. iii. 1).

4. *nothing that is* **produced by** *the grape-vine*] R.V. 'made of the grape-vine,' though a literal rendering of the Hebrew, is misleading. The meaning is evidently that of Jud. xiii. 14 'nothing that cometh forth (יֵצֵא) from the grape-vine.' This meaning of עָשָׂה 'to make,' or 'produce,' in the course of nature is found with some frequency; e.g. Gen. i. 11 f., xli. 47, Is. v. 2, 4, 10.

from the kernels even to the husk] The Heb. idiom 'from...to...' frequently represents the English 'either...or...' or '**neither**...**nor**...' Cf. Gen. xiv. 23, lit. 'from a thread to a shoe-latchet'; Gen. xxxi. 24, 29 'from good to bad.'

The words rendered 'kernels' (*ḥarṣannīm*) and 'husk' (*ṣāg*) are not found elsewhere in the O.T. and their meaning is uncertain.

It is not very natural to speak of the kernels (i.e. the stones or pips) and the husk (i.e. the skin) of the grape as *produced* by the vine. But no better rendering of the words has been proposed. The general sense, however, is clear. The eating of any sort of grape product is prohibited, even the most trifling or unpalatable parts of the produce of the vine.

The custom of abstaining from wine and intoxicants may have arisen in a remote past from a primitive belief that the spirit or *numen* of the vine entered into a man when he drank (see Frazer, *Golden Bough*, i. 359 f.); or, as Jer. xxxv. 6 f. suggests in the case of the Rechabites, it

P of his vow of separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall be holy, he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow long. All the days that 6
he separateth himself unto the LORD he shall not come near to a dead body. He shall not make himself unclean for his 7
father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die: because his separation unto God is upon his head. All the days of his separation he is holy unto the 8
LORD. And if any man die very suddenly beside him, and 9

arose from a desire to conform closely to ancient nomadic habits after the nation as a whole had become an agricultural community (W. R. Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, 84 f.). Whatever the origin may have been, the Naziriteship had, in prophetic times, a valuable moral significance as a protest against luxury and sensuality. See Driver on Am. ii. 11.

Again, the prohibition of wine is distinct from that of all intoxicants[1]. The former is probably the more primitive. And the form of the regulations found here may very possibly have been the result of the fusion of ancient practices which were at one time unconnected, and not all observed by earlier Nazirites.

5. *Second regulation.* The hair to be left uncut. This is found in every reference to the Nazirites, both in early and late times. Long hair was the visible mark of consecration.

6, 7. *Third regulation.* Avoidance of pollution from contact with a dead body, even that of the nearest relative.

7. The stringent rule here laid down was applicable to no one else except the High Priest (Lev. xxi. 11); in the case of the ordinary priest the nearest relatives are expressly excepted. It is to be noticed that Samson did not scruple to come into frequent contact with the dead. The regulation was probably not in force in early days, but was added when the sanctity attributed to a Nazirite had increased.

his separation] Heb. *nēzer* (connected with *nāzīr*) denotes either the *state of separation* (*vv.* 4, 6 R.V. marg. 'Naziriteship'), or, as here, the *symbol of separation*, i.e. the long hair. Cf. the similar ellipse in 1 Cor. xi. 10, 'the woman ought to have [the symbol of] authority on her head.' In Lev. xxv. 5, 11 *nēzer* is even used for an untrimmed vine, with its long tendrils like uncut hair.

9—12. The third regulation might be unavoidably infringed if a sudden death occurred in the Nazirite's presence. He was then unclean for seven days. At the end of that period he shaved close his polluted hair, and on the next day brought an offering. He was now considered free from pollution, and he began the whole period of his vow afresh.

[1] On intoxicants other than wine see Hastings' *DB.* ii. 33[b].

he defile the head of his separation; then he shall shave his *P*
head in the day of his cleansing, on the seventh day shall he
10 shave it. And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtle-
doves, or two young pigeons, to the priest, to the door of the
11 tent of meeting: and the priest shall offer one for a sin
offering, and the other for a burnt offering, and make atone
ment for him, for that he sinned by reason of the dead, and
12 shall hallow his head that same day. And he shall separate
unto the LORD the days of his separation, and shall bring a
he-lamb of the first year for a guilt offering: but the former
days shall be void, because his separation was defiled.

9. *the head of his separation*] i.e. his head with the long hair, the symbol of his consecration.

in the day of his cleansing] Better *of his* **cleanness**, i.e. in the day when he became clean.

shall he shave it] The hair, being polluted, must be got rid of in some way that would prevent it defiling other objects. The present law does not mention this; but in accordance with ancient practice it would probably be buried (W. R. Smith, *Rel. Sem.*[2] 369 ff.); and this is laid down in the Mishnah.

10. The prescribed birds were an inexpensive form of offering; cf. Lev. v. 7, xii. 8, xiv. 30 f., xv. 14 f., 29 f.; Lc. ii. 24.

11. *a sin-offering*] A form of sacrifice not mentioned in the historical or prophetical books. Its purpose was the removal of defilement, separation from all that was not holy. It was thus used at the consecration of *places* (Ex. xxix. 36, Lev. viii. 14 f.), and of *persons*—priests (Ex. xxix. 14, Lev. iv. 3, viii. 2, 14 &c.), and Levites (Num. viii. 8, 12); and also to make atonement for inadvertent transgressions (xv. 24, 27, Lev. iv. 2, 13 &c.), and for ceremonial uncleanness (here, Lev. xii. 6, 8, xiv. 19, xv. 15).

Before the exile the sin-offering appears only as a fine levied by the priests at the sanctuary (2 K. xii. 16).

a burnt-offering] A very ancient rite, expressing self-dedication to God.

hallow his head] It had become free from pollution on the previous day, but needed re-hallowing for the purposes of the vow.

12. *he shall separate* &c.] He shall separate anew the whole period of the vow upon which he had originally entered.

a guilt-offering] This was the most expensive part of the ritual. Opinions differ as to the exact force attaching to it. But the distinctive feature of the offering in other cases seems to have been that it involved an act of reparation for wrong done (see on v. 6—8). In the present case it is probably reparation for the delay in the completion of the vow and therefore of the sacrifices which consummated it.

P And this is the law of the Nazirite, when the days of his 13
separation are fulfilled: he shall be brought unto the door
of the tent of meeting: and he shall offer his oblation unto 14
the LORD, one he-lamb of the first year without blemish for
a burnt offering, and one ewe-lamb of the first year without
blemish for a sin offering, and one ram without blemish for
peace offerings, and a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine 15
flour mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with
oil, and their meal offering, and their drink offerings. And 16
the priest shall present them before the LORD, and shall offer
his sin offering, and his burnt offering: and he shall offer the 17
ram for a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, with the
basket of unleavened bread: the priest shall offer also the
meal offering thereof, and the drink offering thereof. And 18
the Nazirite shall shave the head of his separation at the
door of the tent of meeting, and shall take the hair of the

13—21. The ceremony at the completion of the vow. This consisted of three parts: (*a*) The Nazirite brought a burnt-offering, sin-offering, and peace-offering, with the usual meal-offering and libations attached to the burnt-offering and the sin-offering (see xv. 4—6), and the priest offered them (*vv.* 13—17). (*b*) He shaved his head, standing near the door of the Tent by the altar in the court, and threw the hair into the fire on the altar that was consuming the fat of the peace-offering (*v.* 18). (*c*) After the fat was burnt, the priest waved the shoulder of the peace-offering and part of the meal-offering, and took them as his own perquisite, together with the breast and the 'thigh of contribution' which usually fell to him. A sacrificial feast, not here mentioned, must have followed, at which the meat was eaten, and perhaps the Nazirite joined in it, for the worshipper in all other cases had a share in the peace-offering (see art. 'Sacrifice' in Hastings' *DB.* iv. 338).

14. *peace-offerings*] Heb. *shelāmīm.* The meaning is uncertain. Some connect it with *shālōm* 'peace,' and explain it as 'the sacrifice offered when friendly relations existed towards God, as distinct from piacular offerings which presupposed estrangement.' So LXX. *θυσία εἰρηνική.* Others derive it from a verb *shillēm* denoting to 'make restitution,' and so 'to pay what is due'; hence a thank- or votive-offering. It was generally offered on joyful occasions, God and the worshipper partaking together of the sacrifice. God's portion comprised the fat and viscera of the victim, which were offered to Him by being burnt.

18. The burning of the hair is of the nature of an offering, and also prevents its desecration. The custom is not confined to the Hebrews, but finds many parallels in antiquity and in primitive races to-day. The hair is considered to be the special seat of the life and strength of

head of his separation, and put it on the fire which is under *P*
19 the sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall take
the sodden shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake
out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put
them upon the hands of the Nazirite, after he hath shaven
20 *the head of* his separation: and the priest shall wave them
for a wave offering before the LORD; this is holy for the
priest, together with the wave breast and heave [1]thigh: and
21 after that the Nazirite may drink wine. This is the law of
the Nazirite who voweth, *and of* his oblation unto the LORD
for his separation, beside that which he is able to get:
according to his vow which he voweth, so he must do after
22 the law of his separation.
23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto

[1] Or, *shoulder*

the man, and thus represents the man himself when it is offered to the deity.

19. *the sodden shoulder*] It had been previously sodden, i.e. boiled, elsewhere in readiness.

20. *shall wave them*] The portions of a peace-offering which fell to the priest were not appropriated by him until a peculiar ritual had been performed. The breast—and in the present case the boiled shoulder and part of the meal-offering also—were waved or swung, that is, apparently, moved towards the altar and back, as a symbol that the priest first gave them to God, and that God then gave them back to him for his own use (cf. v. 25, Ex. xxix. 27). The word 'wave,' however, is sometimes employed more loosely, and denotes simply 'to offer'; see viii. 11, 13, 15, 21.

heave thigh] *thigh* **of contribution.** See on v. 9.

21. and of *his oblation*] **namely** *his oblation*. The word is loosely in apposition to 'the law.' The oblation formed the most important factor in the regulations. On the word *tōrāh* 'law' see Chapman, *Introd.* Append. VI.

beside that which he is able to get] i.e. beside what his means enable him to offer further. The law prescribes only the minimum offering. The Nazirite was free, and was probably encouraged, to vow something larger; and he must faithfully do 'according to the vow which he voweth.' The warning given at a later time in Eccl. v. 4 f. shews that vows were not always paid.

VI. 22—27.

The Priestly Blessing.

This fragment of priestly tradition has no connexion with what precedes or follows it. The simple and beautiful three-fold petition

P Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel; ye shall say unto them,

The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: 24

The LORD make his face to shine upon thee, and be 25 gracious unto thee:

The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give 26 thee peace.

So shall they put my name upon the children of Israel; 27 and I will bless them.

probably dates from a time anterior to P; but *vv.* 22 f., 27 are a setting or framework in which P places it. The priestly function of blessing is recognised in Lev. ix. 22 f., Dt. x. 8, xxi. 5, 2 Ch. xxx. 27; cf. Ps. cxviii. 26, Ecclus. xxxvi. 17, xlv. 15, l. 21. In the thrice repeated name 'Jehovah' the writer did not, of course, contemplate the doctrine of the three Persons in the Godhead. But the words may nevertheless be regarded as an unconscious foreshadowing of the fuller Christian revelation. The form of the prayer is due to the parallelism which distinguishes Hebrew poetry. The words, which find an echo in Ps. lxvii. 1, may be literally rendered:

Jehovah bless thee, and guard thee.
Jehovah light up His face towards thee, and favour thee.
Jehovah lift up His face towards thee, and appoint for thee welfare.

27. *put my name upon*] This denotes that they are Jehovah's possession, and stand in the closest relationship with Him. Cf. Dt. xxviii. 10, Jer. xiv. 9.

CHAP. VII. 1—88.

The offerings of the princes.

This chapter affords the most striking instance in the Pentateuch of the Priestly style. The mechanical formulas and verbal repetitions are, to modern ears, monotonous and tautological; but for the writer it was evidently a delight to emphasize by this means the liberality of the princes. The twelve princes named in i. 5—15, one for each of the secular tribes, brought gifts for the Tabernacle. Firstly (*vv.* 1—9), each prince gave an ox and each pair of princes gave a wagon. These were assigned by Moses to the Gershonites and Merarites for their work of transport. Secondly (*vv.* 10—83), each prince made an offering, identically the same in every case—flour mingled with oil in silver vessels for meal-offerings, a golden saucer or pan (R.V. 'spoon') full of incense, and animals for burnt-, sin-, and peace-offerings. Jehovah commanded them to present their gifts on successive days (*v.* 11), and the writer therefore enumerates the items practically *verbatim* twelve times. And in *vv.* 84—88 he repeats them yet again with the figures multiplied by twelve, in order to sum up the grand total. He draws

7 And it came to pass on the day that Moses had made an *P*
end of setting up the tabernacle, and had anointed it and
sanctified it, and all the furniture thereof, and the altar and
all the vessels thereof, and had anointed them and sanctified
2 them; that the princes of Israel, the heads of their fathers'
houses, offered; these were the princes of the tribes, these
3 are they that were over them that were numbered: and they
brought their oblation before the LORD, six covered wagons,
and twelve oxen; a wagon for every two of the princes, and
for each one an ox: and they presented them before the
4 tabernacle. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take
5 it of them, that they may be to do the service of the tent of
meeting; and thou shalt give them unto the Levites, to
6 every man according to his service. And Moses took the
7 wagons and the oxen, and gave them unto the Levites. Two
wagons and four oxen he gave unto the sons of Gershon,
8 according to their service: and four wagons and eight oxen
he gave unto the sons of Merari, according unto their service,
9 under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. But

this ideal picture probably in order to encourage liberality for Temple purposes in his own day.

1. *on the day that*] If this is understood strictly, it is the date given in Ex. xl. 17, and is one month *earlier* than the date of Num. i. 1. But the following verse ('them that were numbered') presupposes the census and the appointment of the tribal chiefs which occurred *after* the erection of the Tabernacle. Either the writer of this chapter was later than the writer of ch. i., and failed to notice the discrepancy, or 'on the day that' must be understood loosely to mean 'at the time when'—'after.' Cf. *v.* 84 ('in the day when it was anointed') with *v.* 88 ('after that it was anointed').

The anointing of the Tabernacle and the Altar was commanded in Ex. xl. 9 f.

2. *offered*] The verb cannot, as in English, stand alone with an absolute force. It is intended to govern 'their oblation' in *v.* 3; but the remainder of the verse is a parenthesis, and the sentence is then resumed with another verb, 'and they brought.'

covered wagons] The word *ʿāḇh*, rendered 'covered,' is doubtful. It is the singular of a substantive found only in Is. lxvi. 20 (R.V. 'litters'). The expression may mean *litter-wagons*, i.e. wagons covered like a litter or palanquin. So LXX. ἁμάξας λαμπηνικάς, 'wagons like covered chariots.' But perhaps the text is corrupt.

7—9. The transport duties of each of the Levitical families are laid down in ch. iv.

P unto the sons of Kohath he gave none: because the service of the sanctuary belonged unto them; they bare it upon their shoulders. And the princes offered [1]for the dedication of 10
the altar in the day that it was anointed, even the princes offered their oblation before the altar. And the LORD said 11
unto Moses, They shall offer their oblation, each prince on his day, for the dedication of the altar.

And he that offered his oblation the first day was Nahshon 12
the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah: and his obla- 13
tion was one silver charger, the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meal offering; one golden spoon of 14
ten *shekels*, full of incense; one young bullock, one ram, 15
one he-lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering; one male 16
of the goats for a sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace 17
offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year: this was the oblation of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

On the second day Nethanel the son of Zuar, prince of 18
Issachar, did offer: he offered for his oblation one silver 19
charger, the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meal offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of 20
incense; one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the 21
first year, for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a 22
sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two 23
oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year: this was the oblation of Nethanel the son of Zuar.

[1] Or, *the dedication-gift*

9. *the sanctuary*] *the* **holy things**. See on iv. 15.

upon their shoulders] In early days this form of honour was not always paid to the ark; see 2 S. vi. 3.

10. The gifts which they brought after the wagons and oxen were such as to provide the first complete set of offerings upon the altar for all the different forms of sacrifice.

offered for the dedication] *offered* **the dedication-gift** (as R.V. marg.). The abstract word 'dedication' or 'inauguration' is employed with a concrete meaning.

13. *charger*] a dish. Cf. Ex. xxv. 29, xxxvii. 16.

24 On the third day Eliab the son of Helon, prince of the *P*
25 children of Zebulun: his oblation was one silver charger, the
weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver
bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary;
both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meal
26 offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense;
27 one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the first year,
28 for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a sin offering;
29 and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams,
five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year: this was the
oblation of Eliab the son of Helon.
30 On the fourth day Elizur the son of Shedeur, prince of
31 the children of Reuben: his oblation was one silver charger,
the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one
silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanc-
tuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a
32 meal offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of in-
33 cense; one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the
34 first year, for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a
35 sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two
oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year:
this was the oblation of Elizur the son of Shedeur.
36 On the fifth day Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai,
37 prince of the children of Simeon: his oblation was one
silver charger, the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty
shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of
the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with
38 oil for a meal offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full
39 of incense; one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the
40 first year, for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a
41 sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two
oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year:
this was the oblation of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.
42 On the sixth day Eliasaph the son of Deuel, prince of
43 the children of Gad: his oblation was one silver charger, the
weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver
bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary;
both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meal
44 offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense;

one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the first year, 45
for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a sin offering; 46
and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, 47
five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year: this was the
oblation of Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

On the seventh day Elishama the son of Ammihud, 48
prince of the children of Ephraim: his oblation was one 49
silver charger, the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty
shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel
of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with
oil for a meal offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full 50
of incense; one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the 51
first year, for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a 52
sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two 53
oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year:
this was the oblation of Elishama the son of Ammihud.

On the eighth day Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, prince 54
of the children of Manasseh: his oblation was one silver 55
charger, the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*,
one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the
sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil
for a meal offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of 56
incense; one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the 57
first year, for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a 58
sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two 59
oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year:
this was the oblation of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

On the ninth day Abidan the son of Gideoni, prince of 60
the children of Benjamin: his oblation was one silver charger, 61
the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one
silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanc-
tuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for
a meal offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of 62
incense; one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the 63
first year, for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a 64
sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two 65
oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year:
this was the oblation of Abidan the son of Gideoni.

On the tenth day Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, 66

67 prince of the children of Dan: his oblation was one silver *P*
charger, the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*,
one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the
sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil
68 for a meal offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of
69 incense; one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the
70 first year, for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a
71 sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two
oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year:
this was the oblation of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.
72 On the eleventh day Pagiel the son of Ochran, prince of
73 the children of Asher: his oblation was one silver charger,
the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one
silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanc-
tuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for
74 a meal offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of
75 incense; one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the
76 first year, for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a
77 sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two
oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year:
this was the oblation of Pagiel the son of Ochran.
78 On the twelfth day Ahira the son of Enan, prince of the
79 children of Naphtali: his oblation was one silver charger,
the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one
silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanc-
tuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for
80 a meal offering; one golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of
81 incense; one young bullock, one ram, one he-lamb of the
82 first year, for a burnt offering; one male of the goats for a
83 sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two
oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five he-lambs of the first year:
this was the oblation of Ahira the son of Enan.
84 This was the [1]dedication of the altar, in the day when it
was anointed, [2]by the princes of Israel: twelve silver chargers,
85 twelve silver bowls, twelve golden spoons: each silver charger
weighing an hundred and thirty *shekels*, and each bowl seventy:
all the silver of the vessels two thousand and four hundred
86 *shekels*, after the shekel of the sanctuary; the twelve golden

[1] Or, *dedication-gift* [2] Or, *at the hands of*

P spoons, full of incense, *weighing* ten *shekels* apiece, after the shekel of the sanctuary: all the gold of the spoons an hundred and twenty *shekels*: all the oxen for the burnt offering twelve 87
bullocks, the rams twelve, the he-lambs of the first year twelve, and their meal offering: and the males of the goats for a sin offering twelve: and all the oxen for the sacrifice of peace 88
offerings twenty and four bullocks, the rams sixty, the he-goats sixty, the he-lambs of the first year sixty. This was the [1]dedication of the altar, after that it was anointed. And 89
when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with him, then he heard the Voice speaking unto him from above the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim: and he spake unto him.

8 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto 2
Aaron, and say unto him, When thou [2]lightest the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the candlestick.

[1] Or, *dedication-gift* [2] Or, *settest up*

89. An isolated and mutilated fragment describing the intercourse of God with Moses in the sanctuary, and relating the fulfilment of Ex. xxv. 22. The words 'with him' imply that Jehovah has been mentioned previously in the original context of the passage. The verbs 'went,' 'heard' and 'spake' are not frequentative, describing what usually happened. It is a single incident, introducing some words of Jehovah which have been lost. They cannot be the commands in the following chapter, for in that case *v.* 1 would be a meaningless repetition.

CHAP. VIII.

1—4. *The Lampstand.*

The golden lampstand (not 'candlestick' E.VV.) stood in the Holy Place, on the south side, i.e. on the left of one entering from the court. It was the only source of light in the Tabernacle, the Holy of Holies being in darkness. The religious conceptions attaching to it in the time of the writer may be seen from Zech. iv. 1—6^{a}, 10^{b}—14. The full description of the lampstand is given in Ex. xxv. 31—40.

2. *When thou* **settest up**] So R.V. marg. correctly. The lamps were small bowls of oil with wicks. They stood on the top of the central stem and of the three branching arms or shafts on either side. The verb describes Aaron as reaching up to put them in their place after the wicks have been lighted.

in front of the **lampstand**] i.e. towards the opposite (north) side, where the table of the Presence-bread stood.

3 And Aaron did so; [1]he lighted the lamps thereof *so as to* P
give light in front of the candlestick, as the LORD com-
4 manded Moses. And this was the work of the candlestick,
[2]beaten work of gold; unto the base thereof, *and* unto the
flowers thereof, it was beaten work: according unto the
pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made
the candlestick.
5 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the
6 Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse
7 them. And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse
them: sprinkle the water of expiation upon them, and let
them cause a razor to pass over all their flesh, and let them
8 wash their clothes, and cleanse themselves. Then let them

[1] Or, *set up* [2] Or, *turned*

4. *beaten work*] *Repoussé* work, hammered out of a solid plate of gold (Ex. xxv. 31, 36, xxxvii. 17—22). This work was employed also for the Cherubim (Ex. xxv. 18, xxxvii. 7) and the two silver clarions (Num. x. 2).

unto the base...and *unto the flowers*] The Heb. idiom means **both** *base* **and** *flowers*. The flowers were the ornamentation on each of the six shafts and on the central stem. In every shaft there were three cups, and on the central stem four, each consisting of a calyx and petals of an almond blossom. The lampstand of Herod's temple was made on this model, and is familiar from its representation on the arch of Titus.

5—26. *The Levites.*

vv. 5—22. Their purification and dedication. *vv.* 23—26. The age of service. The passage is an expansion of iii. 5—13, with the addition of the rite of purification. The Levites are inferior to the priests, and are therefore merely cleansed from the ceremonial pollution of ordinary life, while the priests receive something higher, an actual quality which the Hebrews called 'holiness,' i.e. not moral excellence, but separation, exclusiveness (Ex. xxix., Lev. viii.).

7. *water of expiation*] lit. *water of* **sin**, a unique expression denoting 'water that washes away sin.' Cf. the 'waters of bitterness' (v. 17 f.), 'water of impurity' (xix. 9). Notice that the Levites are only sprinkled, while the priests (Ex. xxix. 4, Lev. viii. 6) are completely bathed. This comparison suggests that the water here, as there, is intended to be simple pure water.

cause a razor &c.] for the purpose of cleanliness. In Herod. ii. 37 the Egyptian priests are said to 'shave themselves all over their body every other day.'

wash their clothes] as ordinary laymen would do (Ex. xix. 14) for ceremonial cleansing. The priests, on the other hand, were vested in entirely new robes of office (Ex. xxix. 8 f., Lev. viii. 13).

P take a young bullock, and its meal offering, fine flour mingled with oil, and another young bullock shalt thou take for a sin offering. And thou shalt present the Levites 9
before the tent of meeting: and thou shalt assemble the whole congregation of the children of Israel: and thou 10
shalt present the Levites before the LORD: and the children of Israel shall lay their hands upon the Levites: and Aaron 11
shall [1]offer the Levites before the LORD for a wave offering, [2]on the behalf of the children of Israel, that they may be to do the service of the LORD. And the Levites shall lay their 12
hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and offer thou the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, unto the LORD, to make atonement for the Levites. And thou 13
shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them for a wave offering unto the LORD. Thus shalt 14
thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine. And after that shall the 15
Levites go in to do the service of the tent of meeting: and thou shalt cleanse them, and offer them for a wave offering. For they are [3]wholly given unto me from among the children 16
of Israel; instead of all that openeth the womb, even the firstborn of all the children of Israel, have I taken unto me. For all the firstborn among the children of Israel are mine, 17
both man and beast: on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself. And I 18
have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel. And I have given the Levites as [4]a gift 19

[1] Heb. *wave*, and in vv. 13, 15, 21 [2] Or, *from*
[3] See ch. iii. 9. [4] Heb. *Nethunim*, given

10. *shall lay their hands*] Through their representatives (i. 4—16), to indicate that the whole community offered the Levites as their gift. Cf. the same action in the case of the burnt-offering (Lev. i. 4).

11. *offer*] **wave**, as R.V. marg.; see *vv.* 13, 15, 21. The literal significance of the term (see on v. 25) is here lost, but the underlying thought remains that, having been given to Jehovah, the Levites were given back by Him for ritual service to the priests and the congregation.

12. For the sin-offering and burnt-offering see on vi. 11.

13. The Levites are formally handed over to the priests as their ministers.

19. *as a gift*] lit. 'given [persons].' See on iii. 9.

to Aaron and to his sons from among the children of Israel, *P*
to do the service of the children of Israel in the tent of
meeting, and to make atonement for the children of Israel:
that there be no plague among the children of Israel, [1]when
20 the children of Israel come nigh unto the sanctuary. Thus
did Moses, and Aaron, and all the congregation of the children
of Israel, unto the Levites: according unto all that the LORD
commanded Moses touching the Levites, so did the children
21 of Israel unto them. And the Levites purified themselves
from sin, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron offered
them for a wave offering before the LORD; and Aaron made
22 atonement for them to cleanse them. And after that went
the Levites in to do their service in the tent of meeting before
Aaron, and before his sons: as the LORD had commanded
Moses concerning the Levites, so did they unto them.
23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, This is that
24 which belongeth unto the Levites: from twenty and five
years old and upward they shall go in [2]to wait upon the
25 service in the work of the tent of meeting: and from the
age of fifty years they shall [3]cease waiting upon the work,
26 and shall serve no more; but shall minister with their

[1] Or, *through the children of Israel coming nigh* [2] Heb. *to war the warfare in the work* [3] Heb. *return from the warfare of the work*

19. *the service of the children of Israel*] i.e. the service which Jehovah requires from them. They perform it in the person of their representatives, who are now the Levites instead of the first-born.

atonement] Not in this case propitiation for past sins, but the averting of God's anger by preventing sin from being committed. The sin would be two-fold—the non-performance of the rightful worship, and, as the following words (which should be rendered as in R.V. marg.) shew, the too near approach of the laity to the holy things. The Levites are both substitutes for the laity, and at the same time a cordon to keep them at a distance.

that there be no plague] Cf. i. 53.

21. *purified themselves from sin*] lit. 'unsinned themselves.' See on xxxi. 19.

24. *that which belongeth unto the Levites*] An elliptical expression: *that which* [*thou shalt do*] **with regard** *to the Levites.*

from twenty and five years old] In iv. 3 the age is from *thirty years.* See note there.

to wait upon the service] R.V. marg. 'to war the warfare.' See on iv. 3.

P brethren in the tent of meeting, to keep the charge, and shall do no service. Thus shalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charges.

And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of 9
Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were
come out of the land of Egypt, saying, Moreover let the 2
children of Israel keep the passover in its appointed season.
In the fourteenth day of this month, [1]at even, ye shall keep 3
it in its appointed season: according to all the statutes of it,
and according to all the ordinances thereof, shall ye keep it.
And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they 4
should keep the passover. And they kept the passover in 5
the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, [1]at
even, in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the
LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.
And there were certain men, who were unclean by the dead 6
body of a man, so that they could not keep the passover on
that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on
that day: and those men said unto him, We are unclean by 7
the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that

[1] Heb. *between the two evenings*

26. *shall do no service*] i.e. no necessary responsible service. They may assist their younger fellow-Levites as voluntary helpers.
their charges] *their* **functions**; the duties committed to their charge.

CHAP. IX. 1—14.

The Supplementary Passover.

Provision is here made for the celebration of the Passover a month later for persons who were unavoidably prevented from observing it on the right day. It is the first Passover after the Exodus.

1. *in the first month*] The month *preceding* the census (i. 1).

2. **And** *let the children of Israel* &c.] If the text is correct some previous command or portion of the sentence has been lost. This may have been due to the transposition of the section from its original position. LXX. reads εἰπὸν καὶ κ.τ.λ., 'speak and let the children of Israel keep.'

3. *all the statutes of it*] These were laid down in Ex. xii. 1—20, 43—49 (P), 21—23 (J). The feast is referred to as a type in 1 Cor. v. 7 f.; cf. Col. i. 14, Eph. i. 7 (with Armitage Robinson's note).

6. Uncleanness prevented any share in a sacrificial feast on pain of death (Lev. vii. 20), and contact with a dead body was a source of uncleanness (Num. xix. 11).

we may not offer the oblation of the LORD in its appointed *P*
8 season among the children of Israel? And Moses said unto
them, Stay ye; that I may hear what the LORD will command
concerning you.
9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the
10 children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your
generations shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or
be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto
11 the LORD: in the second month on the fourteenth day [1]at
even they shall keep it; they shall eat it with unleavened
12 bread and bitter herbs: they shall leave none of it unto the
morning, nor break a bone thereof: according to all the
13 statute of the passover they shall keep it. But the man that
is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the
passover, that soul shall be cut off from his people: because
he offered not the oblation of the LORD in its appointed
14 season, that man shall bear his sin. And if a stranger shall
sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the
LORD; according to the statute of the passover, and ac-
cording to the ordinance thereof, so shall he do: ye shall
have one statute, both for the stranger, and for him that is
born in the land.

[1] Heb. *between the two evenings*

10. Provision is made both for accidental uncleanness, and also for absence on a journey. This is evidently intended to be exhaustive, and was understood in later days to include all good reasons which might prevent anyone from keeping the festival. Cf. 2 Chr. xxx. 2, 15.

of your generations] i.e. of future generations.

12. *nor break a bone thereof*] Cf. John xix. 36.

13. *shall be cut off*] He shall suffer death by divine agency, not by punishment inflicted at the hands of the community.

shall bear his sin] Shall suffer the consequences of his sin; cf. xviii. 22, 32 (P), Lev. xix. 17, xx. 20, xxii. 9, xxiv. 15 (H), Ez. xxiii. 49.

14. *a stranger*] *a* **sojourner**. The Heb. *gêr* has no exact equivalent in English. He was one who was not an Israelite but who, permanently or for a considerable period, put himself under Israelite protection and became a member of the community. He was sharply distinguished from a foreigner, who was making only a temporary stay in the country (*tôshābh*, see xxxv. 15). The latter was forbidden to eat the Passover (Ex. xii. 45).

him that is born in the land] Heb. *'ezrāḥ*, a **native of** *the land*, i.e. a full-blooded Israelite. R.V. sometimes 'home-born,' e.g. xv. 13, 30,

P And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the 15
cloud covered the tabernacle, even the tent of the testimony:
and at even it was upon the tabernacle as it were the appear-
ance of fire, until morning. So it was alway: the cloud 16
covered it, and the appearance of fire by night. And when- 17
ever the cloud was taken up from over the Tent, then after
that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where
the cloud abode, there the children of Israel encamped.
At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel 18
journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they
encamped: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle
they remained encamped. And when the cloud tarried upon 19
the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept
the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not. And sometimes 20

IX. 15—23.

The fiery cloud upon the Tabernacle.

After a reference (*v.* 15[a]) to the event related in Ex. xl. 34f., the section describes the invariable custom throughout the journeys of starting on the march when the cloud rose from the Tabernacle, and halting as long as it rested. It is an expansion of Ex. xl. 36—38. The characteristic redundancy of the priestly style is noticeable.

The different writers of the Pentateuch describe different features in the appearance of the cloud. In J Jehovah is represented as leading the people by moving in front of them in a column of cloud by day and of fire by night (see on xiv. 14), and this began at the departure from Egypt (Ex. xiii. 21). In E the cloud is pictured similarly as a column, but its appearance is not mentioned until the sacred 'tent of meeting' had been erected, when it came down from time to time and stood at the door of the tent which was pitched outside the camp (Ex. xxxiii. 7—11, Num. xi. 25, xii. 5, 10, Dt. xxxi. 15). In P it is not described as a column, but (as in J) it was fiery at night, and (as in E) it did not appear till the Tabernacle was erected, except that it formed part of the theophany on Mt Sinai (Ex. xxiv. 15—18). It is not spoken of as a guide moving in front of the people, but it covered the Tabernacle which stood in the centre of the camp. It was the visible counterpart outside the sanctuary of the 'Glory,' the manifestation of the divine presence within.

15. ***it* used to be *upon the* Dwelling**] The verbs throughout the rest of the chapter are frequentative, with the exception of 'they kept' in *v.* 23.

18. ***at the commandment***] lit. 'mouth.' Not only was a sign given by the cloud, but Jehovah used to give an oral command to Moses when the march was to begin and end.

the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle; then according to the commandment of the LORD they remained encamped, and according to the commandment of the LORD
21 they journeyed. And sometimes the cloud was from evening until morning; and when the cloud was taken up in the morning, they journeyed: or *if it continued* by day and by
22 night, when the cloud was taken up, they journeyed. Whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, abiding thereon, the children of Israel remained encamped, and journeyed not: but when it was
23 taken up, they journeyed. At the commandment of the LORD they encamped, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: they kept the charge of the LORD,
10 at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee
2 two trumpets of silver; of [1]beaten work shalt thou make

P

[1] Or, *turned*

21. Sometimes the cloud remained only from the evening till the next morning; sometimes it remained for a whole day and the following night; sometimes (*v.* 22) much longer. It is not necessary to press the question whether the writer thought that, when the encampment was for a single night's rest, the whole elaborate structure was erected. He wishes to state exhaustively that the signal of the cloud was invariably obeyed.

22. *a year*] Heb. 'days.' This sometimes means 'a year' (e.g. 1 Sam. xxvii. 7); but here it perhaps denotes only an indefinite period longer than a month.

CHAP. X. 1—10.

The two silver Clarions.

v. 2[a]. Their workmanship; *vv.* 2[b]—8, their three-fold use during the wanderings; *vv.* 9, 10, their two-fold use in Canaan.

2. *trumpets*] or **clarions** (*ḥaṣōṣərōth*). This rendering serves to distinguish the word from (*a*) the 'ram's horn' (*yōbhēl*), used at Sinai (Ex. xix. 13), at Jericho (Jos. vi. 5), and to usher in the year of *yōbhēl*, i.e. the 'Jubile'—(*b*) the 'trumpet' (*shōphār*), which was the instrument ordinarily employed for secular purposes. The clarion is a secular instrument only in Hos. v. 8 (R.V. 'cornet'), 2 K. xi. 14 = 2 Ch. xxiii. 13 (R.V. 'trumpet'). It is a sacred instrument in Ps. xcviii. 6 and frequently in P and Chr.-Ezr.-Neh. Its shape was that of a straight slender tube with an expanding mouth. See the illustrations in Driver's *Amos*, p. 145.

P them: and thou shalt use them for the calling of the congregation, and for the journeying of the camps. And when 3
they shall blow with them, all the congregation shall gather themselves unto thee at the door of the tent of meeting. And if they blow but with one, then the princes, the heads 4
of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee. And when ye blow an alarm, the camps that lie on the east 5
side shall take their journey. And when ye blow an alarm 6
the second time, the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey: they shall blow an alarm for their journeys. But when the assembly is to be gathered together, 7
ye shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm. And the 8
sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be to you for a statute for ever throughout your generations. And when ye go to war in your land against 9
the adversary that oppresseth you, then ye shall sound an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.

2b—8. During the journeyings the clarions are to be used for summoning an assembly of the congregation (*v.* 3), or a council of the princes (*v.* 4), or for a signal to start on the march (*vv.* 5, 6).

3. *when they shall blow*] See on *v.* 5.

with them] i.e. with both of them together, in contrast with the use of one alone in *v.* 4.

5. *blow an alarm*] A signal quite different from the simple 'blow' in *vv.* 3, 4. But it is not known in what the difference consisted. Some think that 'to blow' means to produce a single long blast, while 'to blow an alarm' was to produce several short sharp notes—a 'fanfare' (Heb. *terū'āh*). But the converse is equally likely.

6. *they shall blow an alarm for their journeys*] i.e. for their *startings*. This is apparently intended as a brief way of saying that for each of the four groups of tribes a separate alarm shall be blown as a signal to start. It might be expected that the priestly writer, with his love of repetition, would continue his statement in similar language for the other three groups. In the LXX. this is actually done, the order being East, South, West, North. This statement has very possibly dropped out of the Heb. text. In the Vulg. there is the short sentence 'and according to this manner shall the rest do.'

9, 10. In Canaan the clarions are to be used in war (*v.* 9) and in peace (*v.* 10); and their purpose, in both, is to remind Jehovah of His people; see v. 26.

9. 2 Ch. xiii. 12—16 relates an occasion on which the clarions brought success in battle.

10 Also in the day of your gladness, and in your set feasts, and P
in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the
trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of
your peace offerings; and they shall be to you for a memorial
before your God: I am the LORD your God.

11 And it came to pass in the second year, in the second

10. *the day of your gladness*] Any special public festival of joy or thanksgiving, e.g. after a victory.

your set feasts] *your* **fixed solemnities**, whether festival or fast. They are enumerated in the priestly calendar (ch. xxviii. f., Lev. xxiii.)—the Passover, the three Annual Festivals (viz. Feast of Unleavened Cakes; F. of Weeks; F. of Booths), the Day of Atonement, and the F. of Trumpet-blowing.

in the beginnings of your months] Every new moon, i.e. the 1st day of the month. The F. of Trumpet-blowing was the greatest of these—the 1st day of the sacred seventh month (xxix. 1). See Ps. lxxxi. 3 f.

SECOND DIVISION: chs. x. 11—xxii. 1. JOURNEYS BETWEEN SINAI AND MOAB.

Chapters x. 11—xxii. 1 form the second main division of the book, comprising the journeyings between the departure from Sinai and the arrival at the steppes of Moab opposite Jericho. The first division is entirely from P, but at this point the compiler begins to insert into P narratives from the earlier writings J and E.

The contents of the second division are briefly as follows:

(*a*) x. 11—xii. 16. Events in the journey from Sinai to the Wilderness of Paran.

(*b*) xiii., xiv. The narrative of the spies; the Israelites are condemned to wander for forty years.

(*c*) xv.—xix. A Priestly section containing a variety of laws on ritual and offerings, and (xvi.—xvii. 11) the narrative of Korah combined with the narrative (from JE) of Dathan and Abiram.

(*d*) xx.—xxii. 1. Events in the journeys until the arrival at Moab.

It will be seen that this is not a history of the wanderings, but only of a few incidents at the beginning and at the end of them. See the preliminary note on ch. xx.

X. 11—34.

The departure from Sinai.

The section consists of two well-defined narratives: *vv.* 11—28 (P) and *vv.* 29—33 (J). The latter is obviously parallel to the former, and not a continuation of it; Moses' request to Hobab was made immediately before the departure. *v.* 34 is P's continuation of *v.* 28.

11. The date is 19 days later than that in i. 1, and 10 months 19 days after the arrival at Sinai (cf. Ex. xix. 1, xl. 17).

P month, on the twentieth day of the month, that the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle of the testimony. And the children of Israel set forward according to their 12
journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud abode in the wilderness of Paran. And they first took 13
their journey according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses. And in the first *place* the standard 14
of the camp of the children of Judah set forward according to their hosts: and over his host was Nahshon the son of Amminadab. And over the host of the tribe of the children 15
of Issachar was Nethanel the son of Zuar. And over the host 16
of the tribe of the children of Zebulun was Eliab the son of Helon. And the tabernacle was taken down; and the sons 17
of Gershon and the sons of Merari, who bare the tabernacle, set forward. And the standard of the camp of Reuben set 18
forward according to their hosts: and over his host was Elizur the son of Shedeur. And over the host of the tribe 19

the cloud was taken up] It had remained for one month and 19 days, and now was lifted as a signal for departure, as explained in ix. 17—22.

the tabernacle of the testimony] See on i. 50.

12. *their journeys*] *their* **stages**; cf. xxxiii. 1 f., Ex. xvii. 1.

the cloud abode] The verb is that to which *mishkān* 'dwelling' corresponds. The cloud settled down and abode upon the Tabernacle in the wilderness of Paran, as a sign that they were to halt there. See the opening note on ch. xi.

Paran] This wilderness lay to the north of the Sinaitic peninsula. Its eastern border would be roughly a line drawn from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akaba. It is closely connected with Edom in Dt. xxxiii. 2, Hab. iii. 3. See the writer's *Exodus*, p. ciii. It lay between Midian and Egypt (1 K. xi. 18); and was Ishmael's dwelling-place (Gen. xxi. 21 E). It apparently corresponded to the modern desert of Et-tih.

14—27. The group of tribes on the east of the Tabernacle having marched first, the hangings and structure of the Tent and the court were then carried by the Gershonites and Merarites. They were followed by the tribes on the south side; and then the sacred furniture and utensils were carried by the Kohathites. Next came the tribes on the west side, and those on the north side brought up the rear.

17. The verbs in this and the following verse, and in 21 f., 25, are perfects with *Vav*. This use, to describe consecutive actions in the past, though not unexampled in late literature, is rare. And it is probable that the writer intended them to be frequentative. The order of the host in the first march was that which was observed throughout the journeys.

of the children of Simeon was Shelumiel the son of Zurishad- *P*
20 dai. And over the host of the tribe of the children of Gad
21 was Eliasaph the son of Deuel. And the Kohathites set forward, bearing the sanctuary: and *the other* did set up the
22 tabernacle against they came. And the standard of the camp of the children of Ephraim set forward according to their hosts: and over his host was Elishama the son of
23 Ammihud. And over the host of the tribe of the children
24 of Manasseh was Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. And over the host of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was
25 Abidan the son of Gideoni. And the standard of the camp of the children of Dan, which was the rearward of all the camps, set forward according to their hosts: and over his
26 host was Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. And over the host of the tribe of the children of Asher was Pagiel the son
27 of Ochran. And over the host of the tribe of the children of
28 Naphtali was Ahira the son of Enan. Thus were the journeyings of the children of Israel according to their hosts; and they set forward.

29 And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Reuel the *J*
Midianite, Moses' father in law, We are journeying unto

21. *the sanctuary*] But the sacred structure is already in the hands of the Gershonites and Merarites. The required meaning is **the holy things**, and *Ḳōdesh* is probably the true reading, as in iv. 15 (see note there).

the other *did set up*] Heb. has loosely 'and they [used to] set up,' which is equivalent to the passive verb 'and the Tabernacle used to be set up,' i.e. by the other Levites.

29—33 J. This earlier account of the departure from Sinai relates that Moses asked Ḥobab to be their guide, because he would be well acquainted with the places of encampment *en route*.

29. *Hobab, the son of Reuel...Moses' father in law*] These words do not make it clear whether Moses' father-in-law is Ḥobab or Reuel. In Ex. ii. 18 he is Reuel; and accordingly in Jud. iv. 11 Ḥobab is described (in R.V.) as 'the *brother-in-law* of Moses' (and cf. Jud. i. 16). But 'brother-in-law' and 'father-in-law' are renderings of the same Heb. word *ḥōthēn*; and it would be strange to find the father and the brother of the same man's wife described by the same term. Moreover Ex. ii. 16 appears to imply that Moses' father-in-law had no sons. It seems probable that 'Reuel' is a late insertion in Ex. ii. 18 by some one who misunderstood the present passage, and that Ḥobab was really the name of Moses' father-in-law in J. In E the name Jethro is used

J the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel. And he said unto him, 30
I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred. And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; 31
forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou shalt be to us instead of eyes. And it 32
shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what good soever the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

And they set forward from the mount of the LORD three 33
days' journey; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them three days' journey, to seek out a resting place

(Ex. iii. 1, iv. 18, xviii. 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11). The form Raguel (A.V. from the Vulg.) for Reuel is due to the LXX. Ῥαγουήλ, where the γ represents the guttural *'ayin* in the Heb. word.

The narrative of the incident is only fragmentary, for the account of Ḥobab's arrival at Sinai (to which the parallel in E is found in Ex. xviii.) is omitted, and also the answer which he made to Moses' intreaty. It may be gathered, however, from Jud. i. 16, iv. 11 that he yielded and went with them.

30. Ḥobab's words shew that the route from Sinai to his home in Midian (which was on the east of the Gulf of Akaba) was in a different direction from the route to Canaan. This is one of the many indications that Sinai did not lie in the position traditionally assigned to it, and found in modern maps, at the south of the peninsula; otherwise the route of the Israelites would have coincided with that of Ḥobab for a large part of the distance. The site of Sinai seems to have been further north, in the region of Ḳadesh. See the writer's *Exodus*, pp. xcviii—cvi[1].

31. *instead of eyes*] his presence would obviate the necessity of searching for halting places.

33. *three days' journey*] A characteristic expression of J; cf. Gen. xxx. 36, Ex. iii. 18, v. 3, viii. 27.

33b. *the ark of the covenant of* **Jehovah**] This description of the ark, as containing the tablets of the covenant (i.e. the decalogue), is Deuteronomic; cf. xiv. 44, Dt. x. 8, xxxi. 9, 25, Jos. iv. 7, 18, vi. 8 &c.

went before them three days' journey] It is very doubtful if the text can be right. The ark would be useless as a guide if it were three days' journey in advance. In Josh. iii. 4 (P) it went 2000 cubits (*c.* 1000 yards) in front. The words 'three days' journey' may have been accidentally repeated from the former half of the verse, and should perhaps be omitted.

[1] Driver (*Exodus* in this series, pp. 177—191) inclines to the traditional site.

34 for them. | And the cloud of the LORD was over them by day, *J P*
when they set forward from the camp.
35 And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses *J*
said, Rise up, O LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered;
36 and let them that hate thee flee before thee. And when it
rested, he said, Return, O LORD, unto the ten thousands of
the thousands of Israel.

34. *the cloud of* **Jehovah** *was over them*] This appears to mean 'over the Tabernacle' as it was carried in the line of march, in which case the passage is from P and is the continuation of *v.* 28. The expression 'cloud of Jehovah' occurs elsewhere only in Ex. xl. 38 (P), but that is perhaps a wrong reading for 'the cloud was' (יְהִי). See below on xiv. 14.

X. 35, 36. J.

Prayers connected with the movements of the Ark.

The two prayers have no real connexion with the journeyings. They appear to belong to a time when the Israelites had reached Canaan, and used to take the Ark with them into battle. The first prayer speaks of victory over enemies; and the second implies that the Ark *returns* to its sanctuary after the battle. In the desert it never returned to the people, but waited in advance until they came up to it.

35. The prayer is quoted in Ps. lxviii. 1.

36. *unto the* **myriads** *of the thousands*] i.e. of the clans of Israel. See on i. 16, 46.

CHAP. XI. JE.

Taberah. The Manna and Quails. The resting of the spirit upon the elders.

During the journey between Sinai and Paran (the arrival at which is stated in anticipation by P in x. 12) five incidents are placed by the compiler, viz. the three in the present chapter, the fragmentary narrative in xii. 1, and the vindication of Moses against Aaron and Miriam in xii. 2—15. The first and the last two create no special difficulties. But the two which intervene have been fused by a compiler, who has also combined with them a fragment from a third narrative, and these must be separated with care. When this is done, however, a very difficult chapter becomes comparatively clear.

1—3. Taberah. This narrative should perhaps be ascribed to E. No mention is made of the reason for the murmuring of the people. But it is possible that they murmured because they were tired of the manna and wanted flesh. If so, this may have been E's account, parallel

E And the people were as murmurers, [1]*speaking* evil in the 11
ears of the LORD: and when the LORD heard it, his anger
was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them,
and devoured in the uttermost part of the camp. And the 2
people cried unto Moses; and Moses prayed unto the LORD,
and the fire abated. And the name of that place was called 3
[2]Taberah: because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.

[1] Or, which was *evil* [2] That is, *Burning*

to that of J in the verses which follow. In P's itinerary (xxxiii. 16) Taberah is not included; Kibroth-hattaavah is given as the first stopping place after Sinai. D, who had both the narratives J and E before him, mentions both Taberah and Kibroth-hattaavah (in conjunction with Massah) in Dt. ix. 22.

1. *as murmurers*, speaking *evil*] *as* **those who murmur at misfortune.** The murmurings and rebellions of the people, whom Moses controlled with his wonderful power of leadership and personal influence, are related in Ex. xiv. 11 f., xv. 24, xvi. 2 f., xvii. 3, xxxii. 1—4, Num. xi. 1—3, 4—6, xii. 1, 2, xiv. 2 f., xvi., xx. 2—5, xxi. 4 f. They are referred to in Dt. i. 27, Ps. lxxviii. 17—20, 40—42, xcv. 8—11, cvi. 25, 1 Cor. x. 10, Heb. iii. 7—iv. 3.

the fire of **Jehovah**] It is possible that the tradition of divine fire arose, in the first instance, from a catastrophe caused by destructive lightning. But by the time of the writer, who lived some three centuries or more after the event, a miraculous visitation of a much more terrible nature was thought of. Cf. Ex. xix. 18, 1 K. xviii. 38, 2 K. i. 10, 12.

2. *Moses prayed*] The word *hithpallēl* ('pray,' 'intercede') is used in the Pentateuch only by E (xxi. 7, Gen. xx. 7, 17) and D (Dt. ix. 20, 26). In his self-forgetfulness Moses was always ready to intercede for those who had sinned; cf. xii. 13, xiv. 13—19, xvi. 22, Ex. xxxii. 31 f., xxxiv. 9. This gives point to Ben Sira's description of him (Ecclus xlv. 1) as 'beloved of God and men.'

Taberah] i.e. a 'burning' or 'conflagration.'

4—34. (I) The Manna and Quails. J. (II) The burden of the people too heavy for Moses. J. (III) The Spirit of ecstasy upon the elders. E.

These verses should be studied in the following order:

(I) *vv.* 4—10, 13, 18—24[a] (to 'the words of the Lord'), 31—34.

(II) *vv.* 11, 12, 14, 15.

(III) *vv.* 16, 17[a], 24[b]—30.

It will be seen that the narratives (II) and (III) have no real connexion with (I). In the process of compilation two sentences were lost. The words 'And Moses said unto Jehovah' in *v.* 11[a] are required for both narratives, and must be added for (I) at the beginning of *v.* 13. Similarly *v.* 18 (as *v.* 16) must begin 'And Jehovah said unto Moses,

say thou &c. If this is done, two distinct narratives emerge, and a fragment of a third:

(I) The people being weary of manna murmured for flesh. Jehovah was angry and warned them that they would loathe the flesh when it came. Moses was incredulous that such a miracle could be performed. But a wind brought a mass of quails, and a plague was the result.

(II) Moses found the care and guidance of the people a burden too heavy to bear, and prayed that he might die.

(III) Jehovah took some of Moses' spirit and put it upon seventy elders, so that they were filled with prophetic frenzy, including two who were not with the others in front of the Tent. Joshua wished Moses to forbid them, but he refused.

(I) *vv.* 4—10, 13, 18—24ª, 31—34. *Manna and Quails.* In Ex. xvi. there is a more complete narrative of the manna, from P, where *v.* 35 ('they did eat the manna...until they came into the borders of the land of Canaan') shews that manna was not sent on two distinct occasions, but that the two narratives are parallel accounts. In the present chapter the *sending* of the manna is not related (see on *v.* 6). But it must not be concluded from this that our narrative is the *sequel* to that in Ex. xvi.; for (1) a description of the manna is given, as though it were a new phenomenon, in *vv.* 7—9 as well as in Ex. xvi. 14, 31, and there are considerable differences in the two accounts; and (2) the laying of the pot of manna 'before the Testimony' (Ex. xvi. 34) shews that that narrative belongs to a time after the Testimony (i.e. the Decalogue) was given at Sinai. Thus both in P and J it is related that manna was sent after the departure from the mountain. Moreover, while P has this very full parallel account of the manna, it also has fragmentary references to the quails embedded in it. See Ex. xvi. 8ª ('in the evening flesh to eat'), 12 ('at even ye shall eat flesh'), 13ª ('at even the quails came up and covered the camp').

(II) *vv.* 11, 12, 14, 15. It is not at first sight so clear that (II) is unconnected with (III). The gift of Moses' spirit to the elders might seem to be the answer to Moses' prayer for more help in managing the people. And the compiler has given this impression by the insertion of *v.* 17ᵇ. But (1) the spirit is not represented as being a spirit of wisdom and understanding, but merely of ecstasy or frenzy which enabled them to 'prophesy' as in the case of Saul and his messengers at a later time (1 S. xix. 20 f., 23 f.). Moses' answer to Joshua (*v.* 29) as well as the express statement that the inspiration was purely temporary (*v.* 25), quite preclude the idea that the elders were to help him in bearing the burden of the people. And (2) Moses' complaint of the burden is closely similar in thought and language to Ex. xxxiii. 12—xxxiv. 9. The discussion of the whole problem belongs rather to a commentary on Exodus. But it is far from improbable that (II) has been displaced from Ex. xxxiii. Because the people had sinned, Jehovah said that He would not go to Canaan with them; Moses, therefore, would have to bear the burden alone; and he was overwhelmed with the thought. In consequence of Moses' repeated intercession Jehovah relented and condescended to go with them.

(III) *vv.* 16, 17¹, 24ᵇ—30. There are indications that the narrative

J And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a 4
lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and
said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the 5
fish, which we did eat in Egypt for nought; the cucumbers,
and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the

of the elders is from E. Now the last passage from E previously to this is Ex. xxxiii. 7—11, a fragment relating Moses' usual practice with regard to the 'Tent of Meeting,' in which the young man Joshua acted as his minister, and where Jehovah used to 'come down' in the cloud and converse with Moses. If that passage and (III) are read side by side, it will be seen that they are connected in the closest possible manner, both in style and subject-matter.

(I) **4—10.** The Manna.

4. The place where the incident occurred is not stated. But in *v.* 34 a name is given to the spot in consequence of the event.

the mixed multitude] The Heb. word *'asaphsūph* is a reduplicated form from *'āsaph* 'to collect.' The alliteration may be represented by *riff-raff*. It is a contemptuous term for non-Israelites who had attached themselves to the camp. They would include Egyptians with whom Israelites may to a small extent have intermarried (Lev. xxiv. 10), and people of various nationalities who, having been united with the Israelites in the forced building labour in Egypt, would be glad to escape with them. They are mentioned (by a different term) in Ex. xii. 38.

fell a lusting] The words can denote any bodily appetite or desire, legitimate or otherwise. In 1 Cor. x. 6 Christians are warned by the example of the Israelites.

wept again] No murmuring by the mixed multitude has been previously recorded, and in previous murmurings of the people in general *weeping* has not been mentioned. But the word need not be pressed. J relates a murmuring in Ex. xv. 23—25. It is not certain, however, that the words are in their original form. The Heb. idiom is 'and they returned and they wept'; this makes it possible to suppose that 'and they returned' was inserted by a compiler in reference to the murmuring in *vv.* 1—3. LXX. and Vulg. escape the difficulty by reading 'they sat down and wept' (וַיֵּשְׁבוּ for וַיָּשֻׁבוּ).

Oh that we could have *flesh to eat!*] The necessity for miraculous provision of flesh is evidence that, according to one form of the tradition of the journeys, the Israelites had no flocks and herds. This has been preserved in J together with the contrary tradition that they were richly supplied with them, both at the beginning of the wanderings (Ex. xii. 32, 38), throughout the course of them (Num. xiv. 33 see note, Ex. xvii. 3, xix. 13, xxxiv. 3), and at the end (Num. xxxii. 1). The traditions in P assume an immense wealth in cattle, which made possible the elaborate sacrificial system in force from Sinai and onwards.

5. *the fish*] These were very plentiful in Egypt. See Ex. vii. 21, Is. xix. 8.

the leeks, and the onions] 'Herod. (ii. 125), speaking of the pyramid,

6 garlick: but now our soul is dried away; there is nothing
7 at all: we have nought save this manna to look to. And
the manna was like coriander seed, and the [1]appearance
8 thereof as the appearance of bdellium. The people went
about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it
in mortars, and seethed it in pots, and made cakes of it:
9 and the taste of it was as the taste of [2]fresh oil. And when
the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell
10 [3]upon it. And Moses heard the people weeping throughout
their families, every man at the door of his tent: and the
anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; and Moses was

[1] Heb. *eye* [2] Or, *cakes baked with oil* [3] Or, *with*

says that on it was declared "how much was spent on radishes and onions and leeks for the workmen"' (Gray). The verse accurately summarises the principal articles of diet of the lower classes in Egypt. See Lane, *Modern Egyptians* (ch. vii.).

6. *this manna*] No account has been given in this chapter of the sending of the manna; and it is possible that the writer means to describe not a miraculous food from heaven but a natural phenomenon of the district. Different substances which have been suggested, such as a gum from the tamarisk or *tārfā* tree, oak honey, or an edible lichen, are described in art. 'Manna' in *DB.* and *EBib.* If the numbers of the people were really 600,000 (*v.* 21), the only miraculous feature in the present case would be the enormous supply required for them. But their numbers were, in all probability, much smaller (see on i. 46). When the time of D was reached, the manna had come to be considered a mysterious unknown food (Dt. viii. 3, 16), and the same idea is seen in P (Ex. xvi.), who relates (*vv.* 33 f.) that a pot containing one omer of it was laid up in front of the ark in the Holy of Holies (cf. Heb. ix. 4, Rev. ii. 17). The manna as a type of the spiritual 'Bread that came down from heaven' forms the subject of our Lord's discourse to the Jews in John vi. 30—35, 41—58.

7—9. A parenthetical description of the manna.

7. *coriander seed*] It is rather the *fruit* of the coriander, which is about the size of a pepper-corn. Cf. Ex. xvi. 14, 31. In the former of these verses it is described as 'a small scale-like thing, small as the hoar frost.'

bdellium] A resinous substance of a pale yellowish colour. In Exod. the manna is 'white.'

8. *fresh oil*] **a dainty prepared with** *oil*. The word rendered 'dainty' denotes *something juicy*. LXX. has *ἐγκρίς*, which was a cake made with oil and honey; cf. 'like wafers made with honey' (Exod.).

9. *the manna fell upon it*] The manna probably exuded from the trees on to the ground, where the dew was already lying.

J displeased. And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore 11
hast thou evil entreated thy servant? and wherefore have I
not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of
all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? 12
have I brought them forth, that thou shouldest say unto me,
Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing-father carrieth the
sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their
fathers? Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this 13
people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that
we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, 14
because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with 15
me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour
in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness.

E And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy 16
men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the
elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring
them unto the tent of meeting, that they may stand there

(II) **11, 12, 14, 15.** Moses' despair at the prospect of bearing the burden of the people without Jehovah's help. See prelim. note to the chapter.

11. *evil entreated*] An archaism, for 'treated evil,' 'caused trouble to.'

found favour in thy sight] Cf. Ex. xxxiii. 12, 13, 16, 17, xxxiv. 9.

12. Was it I that conceived...was it I that gave them birth] Israel was brought into being by God and not by Moses.

a nursing-father] i.e. a foster-father who brings up a child instead of its own parent. Cf. 2 K. x. 1, 5, and figuratively Is. xlix. 23.

(I) **13.** The continuation of *v.* 10. The words 'And Moses said unto Jehovah' must be supplied. See prelim. note.

(II) **15.** *kill me...out of hand*] A good equivalent for the Heb. idiom. Kill me at once and have done with it. His cry in Ex. xxxii. 32 has the same meaning.

Cf. Elijah's despair, 1 K. xix. 4. Both Moses and Elijah received the encouragement that they needed; and both were destined for a peculiar privilege (Mk. ix. 4).

let me not **experience** *my* **trouble]** Let me no longer have to face my trouble.

(III) **16, 17a.** The beginning of the account of the seventy elders.

16. *the elders of the people and* **their officers]** The institution of these officials, with an authority inferior to that of Moses, is related in Ex. xviii., which originally stood after the account of the giving of the law at Sinai (see Driver, *Exodus*, p. 162), and therefore in close juxtaposition to the present narrative.

17 with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: *E*
and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will
put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the
18 people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone. | And say *J*
thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow,
and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of the
LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well
with us in Egypt: therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and
19 ye shall eat. Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor
20 five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; but a whole
month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loath-
some unto you: because that ye have rejected the LORD
which is among you, and have wept before him, saying,
21 Why came we forth out of Egypt? And Moses said, The
people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand foot-
men; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they
22 may eat a whole month. Shall flocks and herds be slain
for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be
gathered together for them, to suffice them?
23 And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD's hand
waxed short? now shalt thou see whether my word shall
24 come to pass unto thee or not. And Moses went out, and

17a. *come down and talk with thee there*] Cf. Ex. xxxiii. 9, 11.

take of the spirit which is upon thee] This expresses the primitive notion that 'spirit' (in the sense of an inspiration which imparts wisdom or intellectual ability) came upon a person from without, and could be thought of quantitatively. Moses was endued with such a large share of it that some could be taken from him and put upon others. Cf. 2 K. ii. 9.

17b. *and they shall bear* &c.] This half-verse was probably not part of the original narrative. It seems to have been added by a later writer who thought that the inspiration of the elders was the answer to Moses' complaint of the burden of the people. See above.

(I) **18—24a.** The Quails. The continuation of *v.* 13.

18. *And say thou* &c.] The combination of the quail narrative with *vv.* 16 f. has caused some such expression as **And Jehovah said unto Moses** to drop out from the beginning of this verse.

Sanctify yourselves] Free yourselves from ceremonial uncleanness. Cf. Ex. xix. 10, 14 f.

21. *footmen*] **on foot.** Ex. xii. 37.

(III) **24b—30.** The Elders.

JE told the people the words of the LORD: | and he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the Tent. And the LORD came down in the 25
cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and put it upon the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, but they did so no more. But there remained two 26
men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but had not gone out unto the Tent: and they prophesied in the camp. And 27
there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son 28
of Nun, the minister of Moses, [1]one of his chosen men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And 29
Moses said unto him, Art thou jealous for my sake? would

[1] Or, *from his youth*

24b. *and he gathered* &c.] With the second half of this verse the narrative begun in *vv.* 16, 17a is continued.

25. *in the cloud*] See on ix. 15—23.

they prophesied] They were flung into an ecstatic condition of frenzy. Other instances are recorded in the case of Saul (1 S. x. 10—12, xviii. 10, xix. 23 f.) and his messengers with the prophets at Naioth (*id.* xix. 20 f.). Probably also in the case of Elisha (2 K. iii. 15). At an early stage of thought in Israel such sudden and mysterious attacks were reverently ascribed to divine action; but in process of time they were considered rather as madness, Hos. ix. 7, 2 K. ix. 11, Jer. xxix. 26. The true prophet was realised to be one who, by a deep spiritual insight and conversance with God, was able to declare the divine will with regard to matters both present and future.

but they did so no more] The effect was purely temporary. It was not an imparting of wisdom and influence for the purpose of permanently helping Moses.

26. *them that were written*] i.e. registered as being of the number of the elders and officers. They were not of the number of the seventy, for *v.* 24 says that seventy were present at the Tent.

28. Joshua was not one of the seventy, but was attached to the sacred Tent as its *aedituus* or caretaker. Cf. Ex. xxxiii. 11.

one of his chosen men] R.V. marg. is probably right—**from his youth.** But Joshua was still in his youth (Ex. xxxiii. 11). The narrator, writing long after the event, adds parenthetically a *general* description of Joshua, not merely a description of what he had been at the moment.

29. Moses' reply indicates the special object with which the writer recorded the incident. His object was religious, and the narrative

God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, that the *E*
30 LORD would put his spirit upon them! and Moses gat him
31 into the camp, he and the elders of Israel. | And there went *J*
forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the
sea, and let them fall [1]by the camp, about a day's journey
on this side, and a day's journey on the other side, round
about the camp, and about two cubits above the face of the
32 earth. And the people rose up all that day, and all the
night, and all the next day, and gathered the quails: he
that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread
them all abroad for themselves round about the camp.
33 While the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was
chewed, the anger of the LORD was kindled against the

[1] Or, *over*

possesses an abiding religious value. The conceptions of the divine Spirit and His activity have differed in different ages; but Moses expresses the conviction which is true for all time, that the possession of the Spirit is not confined to particular persons or classes. With a deeper realisation of the truth Jeremiah (xxxi. 33 f.) and Joel (ii. 28 f. [Heb. iii. 1 f.]) teach that the gift of the Spirit is universal. Joel's words were claimed by S. Peter to have been fulfilled (Acts ii. 16 ff.); and S. Paul rejoices in the unity of the Body of Christ because it is animated by 'one Spirit' (Eph. iv. 3, 4), 'dividing to each one severally even as He will' (1 Cor. xii. 4—11).

31. *a wind from* **Jehovah**] He employed a wind to reduce the deluge (Gen. viii. 1 P), to bring and remove the locusts (Ex. x. 13, 19 J), and to drive back the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 21 J).

brought quails **across** *from the sea*] Probably from the Gulf of Akaba. It is so understood by the writer of Ps. lxxviii. 26 who speaks of the east and the south wind.

let them fall] **left them.** The wind suddenly lessened, and the quails came down tired with their long flight. Some of them may have fallen to the ground exhausted, as was frequently the case in quail swarms; but the main body of them were hovering above the ground at a height of about two cubits (*c.* one yard), and were easily netted. Quails fly northwards to Europe in large numbers in March, returning towards the end of September (see art. 'Quails' in Hastings' *DB.* iv.).

32. *ten homers*] Rather more than 100 bushels. The *homer* which was = 10 *ephahs* or *baths* must be distinguished from *omer* (Ex. xvi. 16 &c. only) which was = $\frac{1}{10}$ *ephah*.

spread them all abroad] They spread out the quails to cure them by drying them in the sun. Vulg. *siccaverunt*. This is mentioned by Herodotus (ii. 77) as a habit of the ancient Egyptians.

33. *ere it was chewed*] *ere it* **came to an end**, i.e. before the supply of flesh ran short.

J people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague. And the name of that place was called [1]Kibroth- 34
hattaâvah: because there they buried the people that lusted. From Kibroth-hattaavah the people journeyed unto Ha- 35
zeroth; and they abode at Hazeroth.

E And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of 12
the Cushite woman whom he had married: for he had married a Cushite woman. And they said, Hath the LORD 2
indeed spoken only [2]with Moses? hath he not spoken also [2]with us? And the LORD heard it. Now the man Moses 3

[1] That is, *The graves of lust* [2] Or, *by*

35. *Hazeroth*] It is impossible to identify the site. The name denotes 'enclosures,' and might be applied to any spot where nomads were accustomed to stay with their flocks. Hazor is a similar name, and several places in the south of Palestine had names compounded with Hazor or Hazar.

CHAP. XII. E.

Moses proved to be unique as a prophet of Jehovah.

This narrative belongs to the same circle of ideas as the narrative of the inspiration of the elders in ch. xi. and of the Tent in Ex. xxxiii. 7—11. The Tent is outside the camp, and Jehovah comes down in the cloud to speak.

1. *the Cushite woman*] Cush is usually the Heb. equivalent for Ethiopia. But it has recently been maintained, owing to the occurrence of the name *Kusi* in some Assyrian inscriptions, that there was also a place of that name in N. Arabia. Of an Ethiopian wife of Moses we hear nothing elsewhere, and the verse would seem to suggest that his marriage was recent. If, then, the wife was a native of N. Arabia, it would be possible to identify her with Ẓippōrah whom Moses had married in Midian (ch. x. 29, Ex. ii. 15—21, iii. 1); according to Jud. i. 16, iv. 11 she was a Kenite.

2. They do not deny Moses' prophetic capacity, but they claim an equality with him. If *v.* 1 is not a fragment of a separate narrative, as some think, we must suppose that Moses' marriage was the particular case which gave rise to their claim.

indeed spoken only] The Heb. is emphatic by the use (not found elsewhere) of the two synonyms—*spoken* **only and solely.**

with Moses] R.V. marg. '*by* Moses' is a possible rendering, implying that Jehovah makes use of His prophet as a channel of communication with other men. But in *v.* 6 the poetic parallelism shews that '*with him* (in a dream)' is equivalent to '*unto him* (in a vision).' It is better, therefore, to retain that meaning here.

was very meek, above all the men which were upon the *E*
4 face of the earth. And the LORD spake suddenly unto
Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye
5 three unto the tent of meeting. And they three came out.
And the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud, and stood
at the door of the Tent, and called Aaron and Miriam: and
6 they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words:
if there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make

3. *very meek*] *very* **humble**; it might almost be rendered 'very pious.' The word does not connote meekness towards men, in the sense of patience under wrongs or insults, but always pious humility towards God. It is found frequently in the Psalms; and see Zeph. ii. 3. Because of Moses' humble piety, Jehovah grants him an overwhelming vindication in answer to the jealous challenge. To those who have held that the Pentateuch was from Moses' own pen, this verse, with its appearance of self-righteousness, has always been a serious difficulty.

4. *the tent of meeting*] The narrative affords an instance of the way in which the tent was used. It was not intended for congregational purposes (see on i. 1), but for obtaining an oracular answer from God. And it is possible that this use explains the original meaning of its name, *'ōhel mō'ĕd*. The word *mō'ĕd* denotes 'a fixed time,' 'sacred season.' The Assyr. word *âdânu*, from the same root, described one of the functions of Babylonian priests, i.e. that of determining the right or auspicious time for an undertaking. And it has been suggested, though it cannot at present be regarded as more than a guess, that the Heb. expression may originally have denoted 'the tent where the proper time for an undertaking was determined,' and hence, more generally, the 'oracle-tent.'

5. *they both came forth*] i.e. probably from the tent, not from the camp. In Ex. xxxiii. 8 f. it is said that Moses used habitually to enter the tent, and God talked with him there. The same thing may have occurred in the present case. Aaron and Miriam, in vaunting their claim to equality, imitated the action of Moses and entered with him; and they were then summoned to come forth to hear Jehovah's oracle. His previous command 'Come out ye three unto the tent of meeting' was a challenge to Aaron and Miriam to do as Moses did, and to experience the result. Compare the similar challenge made by Aaron in xvi. 6 f. (P).

6—8. The words of Jehovah (from 'If there be a prophet') are couched in rhythmical form, as was the common practice in the utterance of oracles. As they stand in the Heb. text they fall into ten short lines.

6. *if there be a prophet among you, I* **Jehovah** &c.] The Heb. text is corrupt. The true reading is probably 'a prophet among you' (נָבִיא בָּכֶם for נְבִיאֵכֶם), and 'Jehovah' must be omitted. Its position in the Heb. forbids the rendering of the R.V. Possibly it has been accidentally

E myself known unto him in a vision, I will speak with him
in a dream. My servant Moses is not so; he is faithful in 7
all mine house: with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even 8
manifestly, and not in dark speeches; and the form of the
LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid
to speak against my servant, against Moses? And the 9
anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he
departed. And the cloud removed from over the Tent; 10
and, behold, Miriam was leprous, as *white as* snow: and
Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.
And Aaron said unto Moses, Oh my lord, lay not, I pray 11
thee, sin upon us, for that we have done foolishly, and for
that we have sinned. Let her not, I pray, be as one dead, 12
of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of
his mother's womb. And Moses cried unto the LORD, 13
saying, Heal her, O God, I beseech thee. And the LORD 14

transposed, and the verse should begin 'And Jehovah said,' as Syr. and LXX$^{Luc.}$ have it.

7. *faithful in all my house*] i.e. in everything that has to do with Israel, who are often called the 'house of Israel.' The passage is referred to in Heb. iii. 2, 5, where it is understood to mean that Moses was faithful in such a way that his influence (like that of a trusted servant) extended over the whole of the Old Dispensation, as that of Christ (the Son) does over the New.

8. *even manifestly*] This is not a translation of the Heb., which is corrupt. It is the sort of meaning required, but no satisfactory emendation has been proposed. The versions suggest בְּמַרְאָה (for וּמַרְאָה), which could perhaps mean 'in appearance,' i.e. in a personal manifestation.

and not in **riddles**] A reference to the enigmatical utterances of oracles.

10. *the cloud removed*] Jehovah shewed His anger by departing from Aaron and Miriam in the cloud, not previously to its removal.

leprous as snow] Cf. 2 K. v. 27, Ex. iv. 6 (J). There were different kinds of leprosy—the White Leprosy (Lev. xiii. 13) and two forms of *elephantiasis*. The former, which is the milder kind, is here thought of. (See Driver and White, *Leviticus*, p. 76.)

Aaron received no punishment, possibly because Miriam took the lead in the complaint against Moses. See Dt. xxiv. 9.

lay not...sin upon us] Do not bring upon us the consequences of our sin.

12. *be as one dead*] i.e. become so by the terrible effects of the spreading disease.

14. *I beseech thee*] A single exclamatory particle, which is rendered

said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, *E*
should she not be ashamed seven days! let her be shut up
without the camp seven days, and after that she shall be
15 brought in again. And Miriam was shut up without the
camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam
16 was brought in again. And afterward the people journeyed
13 from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.
And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Send thou *P*
2 men, that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I
give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their
fathers shall ye send a man, every one a prince among them.

'I pray thee' in *v.* 11, and 'I pray' in *v.* 12. We must probably read *'al* for *'ēl* ('O God')—**Nay, I pray, heal her I pray.**

spit in her face] Cf. Dt. xxv. 9, Job xxx. 10, Is. l. 6. Possibly a reference to a custom, which is said to exist among the Arabs of to-day, by which the disgrace was inflicted as a punishment for a misdemeanour. It is implied, though not stated, that Miriam was healed at once, but the pollution of the leprosy remained.

16. *wilderness of Paran*] See on x. 12.

CHAPS. XIII., XIV.

The investigation of the land by the spies: their report, and its sequel.

The narrative presents many serious difficulties which cannot be removed except by the recognition that it contains a fusion of the early traditions of JE with the later account of P. The two chapters should be studied as follows:

JE xiii. 17^b (from *and said*)—21^a (*so they went up*), 22—24, 26^b ([*and they went*] *to Kadesh* &c.)—31, 33. xiv. 1 (partly), 3, 4, 8, 9, 11—25, 31, 39^b—45.

P xiii. 1—17^a, 21^b, 25, 26^a, 32. xiv. 1 (partly), 2, 5—7, 10, 26—30, 32—39^a.

This separation of the traditions depends partly on the presence of characteristic words and expressions, but partly also on irreconcileable differences in the facts which each relate. In JE, the spies start from *Kadesh*; they search the *southern border* of Palestine round Hebron; they report that the land is *fertile* but invincible; *Caleb alone* encourages the people, and is allowed to enter Canaan. In P, the spies start from the *Wilderness of Paran*; they search the *whole* of Palestine; they report that the land is *not fertile*; both *Joshua and Caleb* encourage the people, and are allowed to enter Canaan.

1—24. The spies are sent out, and search the land.

2. *a prince*] The word is very characteristic of P. The spies were not the same princes as those who represented the tribes at the census (i. 5—15). Of the following 24 names, beside Joshua, Nun, Caleb and

P And Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran accord- 3
ing to the commandment of the LORD: all of them men
who were heads of the children of Israel. And these were 4
their names: of the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of
Zaccur. Of the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori. 5
Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh. Of 6
the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph. Of the tribe 7 8
of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun. Of the tribe of 9
Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu. Of the tribe of Zebulun, 10
Gaddiel the son of Sodi. Of the tribe of Joseph, *namely*, 11
of the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi the son of Susi. Of the 12
tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli. Of the tribe of 13
Asher, Sethur the son of Michael. Of the tribe of Naphtali, 14
Nahbi the son of Vophsi. Of the tribe of Gad, Geuel the 15
son of Machi. These are the names of the men which 16
Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea
the son of Nun Joshua. And Moses sent them to spy out 17
JE the land of Canaan, | and said unto them, Get you up this
way [1]by the South, and go up into the mountains: and see 18

[1] Or, *into*

Jephunneh, a few are found in early times, e.g. Palti (1 Sam. xxv. 44), Ammiel (2 Sam. ix. 4), Shaphat (1 K. xix. 16), Shammua (2 Sam. v. 14), Igal (2 Sam. xxiii. 36); in the last two cases, however, the text is uncertain. Others appear to be late. It is probable that the list is artificial, and not based on historical tradition. See on i. 5.

6. *Caleb the son of Jephunneh*] See note on xiv. 24.

16. Joshua has not been hitherto mentioned in P. Ex. xvii. 9, 13, xxiv. 13, xxxii. 17, xxxiii. 11, Num. xi. 28 are all JE. *Hoshea*, as the name of the son of Nun, is found only in *v.* 8 and Dt. xxxii. 44 (in the latter probably a textual error for 'Joshua'). 'Since, according to P, the name of Yahweh [Jehovah] was not revealed until after Joshua's birth (Ex. vi. 3), a name containing Yeho=Yahweh could not have been given him at birth. P therefore attributes the name to Moses' (Gray).

17. *get you up this way by the South*] **go up now into the Negeb.** The name *Negeb*, which denotes 'dry,' 'parched,' was applied to the waste country on the southern border of Palestine, between the cultivated land and the deserts. After the settlement in Canaan 'the Negeb' gained the secondary sense of 'the south,' just as 'the Sea,' acquired that of 'the west' (see on iii. 23). The Negeb is described in G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geogr.* 278—286.

the mountains] A second description of the Negeb (cf. xiv. 40). In Dt. i. 20 it is called 'the hill-country of the Amorites.'

the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, *JE*
whether they be strong or weak, whether they be few or
19 many; and what the land is that they dwell in, whether it
be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in,
20 whether in camps, or in strong holds; and what the land is,
whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or
not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of
the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe
21 grapes. So they went up, | and spied out the land from the *P*
wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, to the entering in of Hamath. |
22 And they went up [1]by the South, and came unto Hebron; *JE*
and Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak,
were there. (Now Hebron was built seven years before
23 Zoan in Egypt.) And they came unto the valley of Eshcol,
and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of
grapes, and they bare it upon a staff between two; *they*
24 *brought* also of the pomegranates, and of the figs. That
place was called the valley of [2]Eshcol, because of the

[1] Or, *into* [2] That is, *a cluster*

21. *the wilderness of Zin*] The geographical statements regarding the tracts south of Judah are vague. In *v.* 26 Paran and Kadesh are placed by the compiler in juxtaposition, but in xx. 1 Zin and Kadesh. See prelim. note on ch. xx.

Rehob] Probably the same as Beth-rehob (Jud. xviii. 28) near the sources of the Jordan.

the **entrance** *of Hamath*] Hamath (a district mentioned in Egyptian inscriptions) lay to the north of Palestine; and the 'entrance' to it seems to have been a well-known pass, formed by a depression between Lebanon and Hermon. It was, according to P, a point on the northern border of Israel's possessions in Canaan (xxxiv. 8).

22. *the children of Anak*] lit. 'the sons of neck,' a Heb. idiom for *the* **long-necked people**. The natives of the Negeb were very tall and lanky. It is very improbable that Anak was thought of as a proper name of an individual. In Deut. the expression is mostly 'sons of Anakim' (plural). The tradition of a race of giants would easily grow up if the natives, as a whole, were taller than the Israelites. *Ahiman*, *Sheshai* and *Talmai* are probably the names of three clans.

Now Hebron &c.] The date of the first building of Zoan (Tanis) is unknown, but was earlier than 2000 B.C. Perhaps the reference is to the re-building of it, which took place at the beginning of the 19th dynasty, i.e. shortly before the Exodus.

23. *a staff*] Perhaps a **bar**; the same word as in iv. 10.

the **wady** *of Eshcol*] The Heb. *nahal* denotes a stream and the

JE cluster which the children of Israel cut down from thence. |
P And they returned from spying out the land at the end of 25
forty days. And they went and came to Moses, and to 26
Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel,
JE unto the wilderness of Paran, | to Kadesh; and brought back
word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed
them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, 27
We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely
it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of
it. Howbeit the people that dwell in the land are strong, 28
and the cities are fenced, *and* very great: and moreover we
saw the children of Anak there. Amalek dwelleth in the 29
land of the South: and the Hittite, and the Jebusite, and
the Amorite, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanite
dwelleth by the sea, and along by the side of Jordan. And 30
Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go
up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to over-
come it. But the men that went up with him said, We be 31
not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger
P than we. | And they brought up an evil report of the land 32
which they had spied out unto the children of Israel, saying,
The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is
a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the

small valley or gorge through which it flows. The modern *wādy* is the nearest equivalent. It is never used of a large river, nor of a wide flat valley or plain. The *wādy* of Eshcol has not been identified.

24. *Eshcol*] 'a cluster' (R.V. marg.). The writer explains the name by the incident.

25—33. The spies returned and reported that the land was very fertile (JE), (but in *v.* 32 not fertile, P), but the inhabitants were tall and terrible and their cities impregnable.

29. Apparently a parenthesis by the narrator or compiler, enumerating the inhabitants who occupied respectively (1) the Negeb, (2) the central hills of Palestine and (3) the western coast-lands, and the Jordan valley. See on xiv. 25.

30. *we are well able to overcome it*] *we* **shall certainly prevail against** *it*.

32. *that eateth up the inhabitants thereof*] It is so unfertile that its inhabitants have not enough to live upon. Some of the spies are represented as contradicting the statement of the others in *v.* 27. The latter dates from a time before the fall of the Southern Kingdom, when the land was rich and prosperous, while the present passage reflects the

33 people that we saw in it are men of great stature. And *JE*
there we saw the [1]Nephilim, the sons of Anak, which come
of the Nephilim: and we were in our own sight as grass-
hoppers, and so we were in their sight.

14 And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried;
2 and the people wept that night. | And all the children of *P*
Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the
whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we
had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died
3 in this wilderness! | And wherefore doth the LORD bring us *JE*
unto this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our

[1] Or, *giants*

state of Judaea as it was known to the priestly writer in the period which followed the Babylonian conquest. See Ez. xxxvi. 8, 11, 13f., 29f., Hag. i. 6, ii. 19.

33. *the Nephilim*] Mentioned in Gen. vi. 4 in connexion with the 'sons of Elohim,' but not elsewhere in the O.T. The derivation and meaning of the name are obscure. Aq. *ἐπιπίπτοντες* ('falling upon') connects it with *nāphal* (נפל) 'to fall,' as though the name described the violence with which the Nephilim *fell upon* their enemies. But LXX. *γίγαντες* ('giants') and Sym. *βιαῖοι* ('violent') are only paraphrases. The name appears to be a relic of primitive mythology, but little more can be said of it. If the Nephilim were thought of as superhuman or semi-divine beings, the spies may have used the name to heighten the effect of their description of the 'sons of Anak' (*v.* 28).

the sons of Anak, which come of the Nephilim] *the sons of Anak* are *of the Nephilim*. A separate sentence, which is absent from the LXX., and was probably added to the Heb. text by a late scribe. He may have meant that the sons of Anak were either *descended from*, or *of the number of*, the Nephilim.

as grasshoppers] Very small and helpless. Oriental speech abounds in similes from nature. Insignificance and weakness are also expressed by 'flocks of kids' (1 K. xx. 27), 'a dead dog' and 'a flea' (1 S. xxiv. 14), 'a partridge' (1 S. xxvi. 20).

xiv. **1—10.** The people mutinied in spite of the protest of Joshua and Caleb.

1. *the congregation*] A word peculiarly characteristic of P.

lifted up their voice] *lifted up* **and uttered** *their voice*. The multiplication of verbs and of subjects in *vv.* 1, 2 seems to be due to the fusion of J, E and P.

2. would that *we had died*] 'God' does not form part of the Heb. expression. The R.V. is not consistent; see xx. 4, Ex. xvi. 3.

3. *wherefore* **is Jehovah about to** *bring us*] The rebellious spirit is more flagrantly expressed in Dt. i. 27.

JE little ones shall be a prey: were it not better for us to return
into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a 4
P captain, and let us return into Egypt. | Then Moses and 5
Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua the son of 6
Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them
that spied out the land, rent their clothes: and they spake 7
unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying,
The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an
JE exceeding good land. | If the LORD delight in us, then he 8
will bring us into this land, and give it unto us; a land
which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not against 9
the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they
are bread for us: their [1]defence is removed from over them,
P and the LORD is with us: fear them not. | But all the con- 10
gregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of
the LORD appeared in the tent of meeting unto all the
children of Israel.
JE And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this 11

[1] Heb. *shadow*

9. *they are* **our bread**] i.e. we shall swallow them up, annihilate them; cf. Ps. xiv. 4=liii. 4, Num. xxiv. 8.

their defence] Lit. 'shadow' (as R.V. marg. states); a common metaphor of great significance in a hot country; see Jud. ix. 15, Is. xxv. 4, xxxii. 2, and the name Bezalel (Ex. xxxi. 2) which denotes 'in the shadow of El (God).' The passage means that the gods in whom the Canaanites trust will be powerless against Jehovah the God of Israel. Cf. Dt. xxxii. 31 'their rock is not as our Rock.'

10. *bade stone them*] i.e. Joshua and Caleb, and perhaps also Moses and Aaron. For the same form of mutiny cf. 1 S. xxx. 6, 1 K. xii. 18.

the glory of **Jehovah**] The visible manifestation of His presence, which, as described by the priestly writers, took the form of fire. It appeared on Mt Sinai (Ex. xxiv. 16), it filled the Tabernacle when it was erected (Ex. xl. 34), and appeared from time to time during the wanderings (Ex. xvi. 10 [reading *Dwelling* for *wilderness*], Lev. ix. 23, Num. xvi. 19, 42, xx. 6). In later Jewish writings the 'Glory' came to be considered almost as a personal representation of God, and was known as the *Shekīnah*—'that which *dwells* [*sc.* among men].' This thought was taken up and given its fullest depth of meaning in the N.T., e.g. S. John i. 14.

11—24. Jehovah threatened to destroy Israel; Moses by his inter-

people despise me? and how long will they not believe in *JE*
me, for all the signs which I have wrought among them?
12 I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them,
and will make of thee a nation greater and mightier than
13 they. And Moses said unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians
shall hear it; for thou broughtest up this people in thy
14 might from among them; and they will tell it to the in-
habitants of this land: they have heard that thou LORD art
in the midst of this people; for thou LORD art seen [1]face to
face, and thy cloud standeth over them, and thou goest
before them, in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of
15 fire by night. Now if thou shalt kill this people as one
man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee
16 will speak, saying, Because the LORD was not able to bring
this people into the land which he sware unto them, there-
17 fore he hath slain them in the wilderness. And now, I
pray thee, let the power of the Lord be great, according as

[1] Heb. *eye to eye*

cession obtained their pardon, but the present generation, with the exception of Caleb, were not allowed to enter Canaan.

12. *make of thee a nation*] Moses would be a second Abraham, the whole nation being descended from him.

13—16. The thought of Jehovah destroying His own people raised a great problem. Jehovah must maintain justice, and yet He must also maintain His own honour among the surrounding nations. The same problem was felt by Ezekiel in regard to the punishment of the exile, but he solved it by the certainty of a glorious return of a purified people in the future (Ezek. xxxvi. 18—28, xxxix. 21—29).

14. *and they will tell it*] *and they will* say. What they will say is not related till *v.* 16, which is introduced by the last words of *v.* 15: 'will speak, saying.' *Vv.* 13, 14 appear to be composed of a series of glosses; and *v.* 14 seems to be corrupt; the LXX., Syr. and Vulg. each presupposes a different reading. It is probable that Moses' words originally began at *v.* 15.

this land] i.e. Canaan, which the people have just refused to enter.

and thy cloud standeth over them] A conception of the cloud different from that in the following clauses; 'standeth over them' implies that the cloud stood over the Tabernacle which was in their midst. The words are probably a priestly gloss, based upon x. 34.

and thou goest before them &c.] This is the conception of the cloud found in J. See note on ix. 15—23.

17. *let the power of* my *Lord be great*] The title *Adonai* is employed, not (as in *vv.* 16, 18) the personal name Jehovah.

JE thou hast spoken, saying, The LORD is slow to anger, and 18
plenteous in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and
that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity
of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon
the fourth generation. Pardon, I pray thee, the iniquity of 19
this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and
according as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt
even until now. And the LORD said, I have pardoned 20
according to thy word: but in very deed, as I live, and as 21
all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD;
because all those men which have seen my glory, and my 22
signs, which I wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet
have tempted me these ten times, and have not hearkened
to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I 23
sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that
despised me see it: but my servant Caleb, because he had 24
another spirit with him, and had followed me fully, him will
I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall

according as thou hast spoken] i.e. in Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7, which is here slightly abbreviated. Moses means that the divine power can shew itself in Jehovah's ability to pardon and punish according to His supreme will.

21. *and as all the earth* &c.] A second oath to strengthen the following statement. Ps. lxxii. 19 perhaps contains a direct reference to the words.

22. *because*] must be omitted. The Heb. *kī* is merely a particle which introduces a fact sworn to.

ten times] There may have been a tradition that the temptings or testings of God in the wilderness were ten in number. But more probably the expression denotes simply a large number of times, like the English 'dozen' or 'score'; cf. Gen. xxxi. 7, 41, Neh. iv. 12, Job xix. 3.

24. *into the land whereinto he went*] Caleb was to receive the country in which Hebron stood (xiii. 22), whither he had gone as a spy; cf. xxxii. 12, Dt. i. 36. In Jos. xiv. 6—14 it is related that Caleb, at the age of 85, claimed the fulfilment of this promise, and received Hebron and the neighbouring hill country.

It is very probable, however, that the history of Caleb is the history not of an individual but of a clan. The name denotes the 'dog-clan,' and perhaps dates from an early time when the clan reverenced a dog as their 'totem' or sacred animal. Nabal was 'of the house of Caleb' (1 Sam. xxv. 3); and the 'Negeb of Caleb' (1 Sam. xxx. 14) was a distinct district in the south of Canaan. In Num. xxxii. 12,

25 possess it. | Now the Amalekite and the Canaanite dwell in *JE R*
the valley: to-morrow turn ye, and get you into the wilder-
ness by the way to the Red Sea.
26 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, *P*
27 saying, How long *shall I bear* with this evil congregation,
which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings
of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.
28 Say unto them, As I live, saith the LORD, surely as ye have

Jos. xiv. 6, 14 Caleb is called the 'Kenizzite,' and in Jos. xv. 17, Jud. i. 13, iii. 9, 11 the 'son of Kenaz'; that is the Calebites were a branch of the Kenizzite tribe, which was itself a division of the Edomites (Gen. xxxvi. 9, 11, 42). The Calebites, or more accurately the Kalibbites, appear to have entered Canaan from the south after leaving the Edomite country, and moved northwards through the Negeb as far as Hebron, as represented in the narrative of the spies. When the tribe of Judah afterwards settled in the same locality, the two tribes entered into friendly relations with each other and also with the Jerahmeelites, another foreign tribe settled in the district. In course of time they so completely coalesced that, after the exile, their descendants were reckoned as genealogically connected with Judah (1 Ch. ii. 4f., 9, 18f., 24—26, 42f.).

25. *Now the Amalekite*...**were dwelling** *in the valley*] This is a parenthesis inserted by the narrator or compiler. It is omitted in Dt. i. 40 which corresponds to the remainder of the present verse. It cannot be from the same pen as xiii. 29, where the Canaanites are described as living in the lowlands by the Mediterranean and along the Jordan, while the Amalekites live in the Negeb. On the other hand 'the valley' is not necessarily at variance with 'mountain' (or rather 'hill country') in *v.* 45, since it denotes not a broad valley or plain but 'a deep place' (עֵמֶק), a defile or declivity among the mountains.

turn ye] They were to retrace their steps, moving S.E. towards the eastern arm of the Red Sea.

26—39. All the people above twenty years old, except Joshua and Caleb, were condemned to wander for forty years and die in the desert. The spies who brought an evil report died by a plague. The greater part of this section has been assigned to P, but elements from early tradition have been incorporated in it. The 'forty years' is alluded to as early as Amos (ii. 10, v. 25), and the wandering in the wilderness in Hos. ii. 14.

26. *And* **Jehovah** *spake*] This is P's immediate sequel to the appearance of Jehovah's glory in the Tent (*v.* 10).

27. *How long* shall I bear *with this evil congregation, which murmur* &c.] The words *shall I bear* represent no part of the Heb. text. Something has perhaps dropped out, but the R.V. gives the general sense.

28. *as ye have spoken*] i.e. in *v.* 2.

P spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: your carcases 29
shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered
of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years
old and upward, which have murmured against me, surely 30
ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I lifted
up my hand that I would make you dwell therein, save
Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. |
JE But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them 31
will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have
P rejected. | But as for you, your carcases shall fall in this 32
wilderness. And your children shall be [1]wanderers in the 33
wilderness forty years, and shall bear your whoredoms, until
your carcases be consumed in the wilderness. After the 34
number of the days in which ye spied out the land, even
forty days, for every day a year, shall ye bear your iniquities,
even forty years, and ye shall know [2]my alienation. I the 35
LORD have spoken, surely this will I do unto all this evil
congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this
wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.

[1] Heb. *shepherds* [2] Or, *the revoking of my promise*

29. *all that were numbered*] in the census (ch. i.). The Levites, however, were not included in that census (i. 47), and the priestly writer probably assumed that the sentence of death in the wilderness did not apply to them. Aaron's son Eleazar succeeded his father as high priest on the borders of Canaan, and he must certainly have been over 20 years of age at this time, since he acted in a responsible position as priest before the departure from Sinai (see iii. 3 f., 32, iv. 16).

33. *your children shall be* **shepherds**] as R.V. marg. They were to continue to rove about with their flocks, instead of settling down to agricultural life in Canaan. The rendering 'wanderers' is due to the Vulg. *vagi*.

and shall bear your whoredoms] Your children, though they will not die in the wilderness, must suffer for your unfaithfulness to God. The metaphor of whoredom, the action of a woman who deserts her husband for another, is frequently applied to Israel. By defiant unbelief (as here), or by the worship of foreign gods (as Hos. ii. 7, ix. 1), or by foreign alliances (as Ez. xvi. 26, xxiii. 1—35), she proved, time after time, unfaithful to Jehovah.

34. *my alienation*] *my* **opposition**. Ye shall experience what it means to be opposed and hindered by me. The subst. occurs in Job xxxiii. 10 only. For the verb cf. Num. xxx. 6 (R.V. 'disallow'), xxxii. 7 (R.V. 'discourage').

36 And the men, which Moses sent to spy out the land, who *P*
returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against
37 him, by bringing up an evil report against the land, even
those men that did bring up an evil report of the land, died
38 by the plague before the LORD. But Joshua the son of
Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, remained alive of
39 those men that went to spy out the land. And Moses told
these words unto all the children of Israel: | and the people *JE*
40 mourned greatly. And they rose up early in the morning,
and gat them up to the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we
be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD
41 hath promised: for we have sinned. And Moses said,
Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the
42 LORD, seeing it shall not prosper? Go not up, for the
LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten down
43 before your enemies. For there the Amalekite and the
Canaanite are before you, and ye shall fall by the sword:
because ye are turned back from following the LORD, there-
44 fore the LORD will not be with you. But they presumed to
go up to the top of the mountain: nevertheless the ark of
the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out
45 of the camp. Then the Amalekite came down, and the

37. *died by* **a** *plague*] This is the meaning of the Heb. idiom, although the definite article is used. The Heb. *maggēphāh* denotes lit. 'a smiting,' as also do πληγή and *plaga*. It is used of any sudden catastrophe inflicted by Jehovah.

39. *Moses told these words*] i.e. those contained in *vv.* 27—35.

39ᵇ—45. Having heard their sentence (in *vv.* 21—25), the people made an attempt to gain Jehovah's favour by marching up to the hills in the Negeb, disregarding Moses' warning that Jehovah would not help them. They received a severe defeat from the Amalekites and Canaanites.

40. *the top of the mountain*] Perhaps a particular hill in the south of the Negeb, close to Kadesh: but it may denote more generally 'the high ground of the hill country.'

44. *the ark of the covenant of* **Jehovah**] The words 'of the covenant' are probably a gloss by a Dt. writer. There is no evidence in J or E that the tablets of the Covenant laws were placed in the ark. See on **x. 33ᵇ.**

and Moses] Moses was the guardian of the ark.

out of **the midst of** *the camp*] In E the sacred tent, in which the **ark** was presumably housed, stood *outside* the camp (cf. **xii. 4, Ex.**

JE Canaanite which dwelt in that mountain, and smote them and beat them down, even unto Hormah. 15

P And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto 2
the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come
into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you,
and will make an offering by fire unto the LORD, a burnt 3

xxxiii. 7—11). The position, here implied by J, afterwards formed an important factor in P's description of the Tabernacle (i. 50, 53).

45. *which dwelt in that* **hill country**] See on *v.* 25.

Hormah] lit. '*the* Hormah'; but it occurs here only with the article. A town or district in the south of Palestine whose site is unknown. In xxi. 3 an explanation of the name is given: see notes there.

CHAP. XV. P.

The chapter contains a miscellaneous collection of priestly laws on five different subjects:

(*a*) *vv.* 1—16. The proper meal-offerings and libations which should accompany burnt- and peace-offerings.

(*b*) *vv.* 17—21. The contribution of the 'first of *'arīsōth*.'

(*c*) *vv.* 22—31. Propitiatory offerings for inadvertent transgressions.

(*d*) *vv.* 32—36. The penalty for working on the Sabbath.

(*e*) *vv.* 37—41. The tassels to be worn at the corners of garments.

1—16. *Meal-offerings and Libations.* These are to accompany both private and public sacrifices, and are arranged according to a fixed scale as follows (*ephah* = *c.* 1 bushel; *hin* = *c.* 1½ gallon):

	Meal.	*Oil.*	*Wine.*
With every lamb	$\frac{1}{10}$ ephah.	$\frac{1}{4}$ hin.	$\frac{1}{4}$ hin.
,, ,, ram	$\frac{2}{10}$,,	$\frac{1}{3}$,,	$\frac{1}{3}$,,
,, ,, bullock	$\frac{3}{10}$,,	$\frac{1}{2}$,,	$\frac{1}{2}$,,

It will be seen that the amount in each case varies according to the size of the animal. Ezekiel, in his ideal arrangements for worship in the restored Jerusalem, has a similar scale (xlvi. 5—7, 11, 14), but the amounts are larger, they are not graduated so carefully with respect to the size of the animal, and the libation of wine is not included. The present scale appears to be a later modification of Ezekiel's.

But while the fixing of definite amounts was probably a late development, the practice of offering meal, oil and wine as an accompaniment of sacrifice was ancient. Men offered to their God the same food which they enjoyed at their own table; cf. Jud. ix. 9, 13 (oil and wine), 1 Sam. i. 24, x. 3 (meal and wine), Hos. ix. 4 (wine), Mic. vi. 7 (oil). Lev. ii. (P) contains regulations for meal-offerings, without fixed amounts, but with the addition of salt and frankincense.

3. *an offering by fire*] A general term covering every kind of offering that was consumed on the altar. The next words define the two

offering, or a sacrifice, [1]to accomplish a vow, or as a free- *P*
will offering, or in your set feasts, to make a sweet savour
4 unto the LORD, of the herd, or of the flock: then shall he
that offereth his oblation offer unto the LORD a meal
offering of a tenth part *of an ephah* of fine flour mingled
5 with the fourth part of an hin of oil: and wine for the drink
offering, the fourth part of an hin, shalt thou prepare with
6 the burnt offering or for the sacrifice, for each lamb. Or
for a ram, thou shalt prepare for a meal offering two tenth
parts *of an ephah* of fine flour mingled with the third part of
7 an hin of oil: and for the drink offering thou shalt offer the
third part of an hin of wine, of a sweet savour unto the
8 LORD. And when thou preparest a bullock for a burnt
offering, or for a sacrifice, [1]to accomplish a vow, or for
9 peace offerings unto the LORD: then shall he offer with the
bullock a meal offering of three tenth parts *of an ephah* of
10 fine flour mingled with half an hin of oil. And thou shalt
offer for the drink offering half an hin of wine, for an
offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.
11 Thus shall it be done for each bullock, or for each ram, or
12 for each of the he-lambs, or of the kids. According to the
number that ye shall prepare, so shall ye do to every one
13 according to their number. All that are homeborn shall do
these things after this manner, in offering an offering made

[1] Or, *in making a special vow*

species of these offerings with which the section deals, i.e. burnt- and peace-offerings, after which are mentioned the different occasions (private and public) on which the peace-offerings might be presented.

a sacrifice] This, as distinguished from the burnt-offering, means the peace-offering, of which the worshipper and priest partook. See on vi. 14.

a sweet savour] *a* **soothing odour.** The expression had its origin in far-off days when the deity was supposed to be soothed or placated by the actual smell of the sacrificial smoke. In Gen. viii. 21 (J), the only Biblical occurrence of the words earlier than Ezekiel, there is a trace of the primitive conception.

7. *the drink-offering*] The wine was offered as a libation to God by being poured out. Whether it was poured on the sacrifice, or, as in later times, at the foot of the altar (Ecclus l. 15), is uncertain.

13. *homeborn*] i.e. native Israelites.

P by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD. And if a stranger 14
sojourn with you, or whosoever be among you throughout
your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of
a sweet savour unto the LORD; as ye do, so he shall do.
For the assembly, there shall be one statute for you, and for 15
the stranger that sojourneth *with you*, a statute for ever
throughout your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger
be before the LORD. One law and one ordinance shall be 16
for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto 17 18
the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come
into the land whither I bring you, then it shall be, that, 19
when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an
heave offering unto the LORD. Of the first of your [1]dough 20
ye shall offer up a cake for an heave offering: as ye do the
heave offering of the threshing-floor, so shall ye heave it. Of 21
the first of your dough ye shall give unto the LORD an heave
offering throughout your generations.

And when ye shall err, and not observe all these com- 22

[1] Or, *coarse meal*

14. *a stranger*] *a* **sojourner.** For this word and the 'homeborn,' see on ix. 14.

or whosoever be among you] This appears to mean one who is residing in the land but has not been granted the definite status of a *gēr* or 'sojourner.' Some, with less probability, understand it of a foreigner who is staying temporarily with Israelites.

throughout your generations] i.e. at any future time.

15. *For the assembly*] **As for** *the assembly*. The subst. is (so to speak) a nominative absolute. It is a general term for the whole of the privileged community, consisting of true Israelites and sojourners.

17—21. *The offering of* '*the first of* '*arīsōth*.' The law deals with some species of meal-offering. But the meaning of '*arīsōth* (R.V. 'dough,' marg. 'coarse meal') is obscure. It occurs elsewhere only in Ez. xliv. 30, Neh. x. 37. A similar word '*arsān* in Talmudic writings denotes 'a porridge or paste made from the meal of barley or wheat,' which was said to be good for invalids and infants.

19. *an heave-offering*] *a* **contribution.** See on v. 9.

20. *the first of your dough*] The word *rē'shīth* 'the first' need not necessarily mean 'first-fruits,' which were offered annually. It may be simply 'the first part,' i.e. a small fixed amount, perhaps at the getting in of each fresh supply for the household.

22—31. *Propitiation for inadvertent transgressions*—(*a*) *vv.* 22—26

23 mandments, which the LORD hath spoken unto Moses, even P
all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of
Moses, from the day that the LORD gave commandment,
24 and onward throughout your generations; then it shall be,
if it be done [1]unwittingly, without the knowledge of the
congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one young
bullock for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour unto the LORD,
with the meal offering thereof, and the drink offering thereof,
according to the ordinance, and one he-goat for a sin
25 offering. And the priest shall make atonement for all the
congregation of the children of Israel, and they shall be
forgiven, for it was an error, and they have brought their
oblation, an offering made by fire unto the LORD, and their
26 sin offering before the LORD, for their error: and all the
congregation of the children of Israel shall be forgiven, and
the stranger that sojourneth among them; for in respect of
27 all the people it was done unwittingly. And if one person
sin unwittingly, then he shall offer a she-goat of the first
28 year for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atone-
ment for the soul that erreth, when he sinneth unwittingly,
before the LORD, to make atonement for him; and he shall
29 be forgiven. Ye shall have one law for him that doeth
aught unwittingly, for him that is homeborn among the

[1] Or, *in error*

committed by the congregation as a whole; (*b*) *vv.* 27—29 by individuals. To these is added the provision that deliberate transgressions cannot be atoned for (*vv.* 30, 31). Another set of laws relating to inadvertent transgressions, apparently dating from a different period, is found in Lev. iv., v.; it is more elaborate, dealing with *four* classes of persons—the high priest, the congregation, a prince, and a private individual.

22—26. *Errors of the whole congregation.* No detailed instances are given; but such errors might consist in some mistake or omission in ritual, or some miscarriage of justice discovered too late; or the error might not be traceable, but the occurrence of some public catastrophe or trouble would be assumed to be a divine punishment for a mistake which had been committed.

24. The offering is a young bullock for a burnt-offering, together with the proper meal-offering and libation, and a he-goat for a sin-offering.

27—29. *Errors of an individual.*

27. The offering is *a she-goat of* **one year old** *for a sin-offering.*

P children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. But the soul that doeth aught with an high 30
hand, whether he be homeborn or a stranger, the same blasphemeth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the word of 31
the LORD, and hath broken his commandment; that soul shall utterly be cut off, his iniquity shall be upon him.

And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, 32
they found a man gathering sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto 33
Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And 34
they put him in ward, because it had not been declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto 35
Moses, The man shall surely be put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, 36

30. *with an high hand*] with deliberate defiance. In xxxiii. 3, Ex. xiv. 8 it is used of the bold defiance with which the Israelites marched out of Egypt.

the same blasphemeth the Lord] **Jehovah doth he revile.** The emphatic position of 'Jehovah' lays stress on the enormity of the crime. The 'reviling' was not necessarily in speech; actions speak louder than words.

31. *his iniquity shall be upon him*] **with his iniquity upon him.** The sinner shall be 'cut off' (see on ix. 13) with the burden of his sin still attaching to him, and unatoned for. In the Christian dispensation the one great Sacrifice has procured atonement for *all* sinners who repent, even though, like the crucified robber, they have sinned with an high hand.

32—36. *The penalty for breaking the Sabbath.* This section was perhaps placed by the compiler next to the preceding because it relates a signal instance of deliberate transgression.

34. It had been declared in Ex. xxxi. 14 f., xxxv. 2 (both P) that Sabbath-breaking must be punished with death, but the method of execution had not been laid down. If, however, the meaning is that they did not know what the man's punishment should be, the present passage is independent of those in Exodus. The Jews who laid down this law in the period after the exile were sternly acting in accordance with the dictates of their conscience. But (though in early days stern punishments may have been salutary) no Christian is compelled to believe that because the law stands in the Bible it is now in accordance with the mind of God. One effect of Christian civilization has been to confine the death penalty to murderers.

and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD *P*
commanded Moses.

37 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
38 the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them
[1]fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their
generations, and that they put upon the fringe of each
39 border a cord of blue: and it shall be unto you for a fringe,
that ye may look upon it, and remember all the command-
ments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye [2]go not
about after your own heart and your own eyes, after which
40 ye use to go a whoring: that ye may remember and do all
41 my commandments, and be holy unto your God. I am the
LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of
Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

[1] Or, *tassels in the corners* [2] Heb. *spy not out*

37—41. *Tassels to be worn as a reminder of Jehovah's commandments.*

38. *that they make them* **tassels upon the corners** *of their garments*] This is commanded (with different words for 'tassels' and 'garments') in Dt. xxii. 12. No statement is there made as to the reason for the observance. It was probably a very ancient custom, dating from a time when such tassels were superstitiously worn as magical charms. Here, however, it has been invested with a higher religious significance. The practice is referred to in the N.T., Mt. xiv. 36, Mk. vi. 56 (E.V. 'border of his garment'); and it continues among the Jews to this day. In the synagogue all males over thirteen years of age wear a special garment called a *tallith*, which 'consists of an oblong cloth with a tassel at each corner. The head is passed through a hole in the middle of the cloth, which hangs over the breast and back.' See art. 'Fringes' in Hastings' *DB.* ii.

upon the **tassel** *of each* **corner** *a* **thread** *of* **violet**] in order to fasten it to the garment.

39. *it shall be unto you for a* **tassel**] The point of this appears to lie in a play on the words *ṣîṣîth* ('tassel') and *ṣîṣ*[1] 'a shining thing,' 'an ornament.' The tassels are not to be superstitious charms but striking ornaments, which will constantly catch the wearer's eye, and act as a religious reminder.

after which ye **go a whoring**] The Heb. has a participle, not an imperfect as R.V. suggests. The words apparently mean—Ye are still prone to follow the superstitious and illegitimate practices to which your heart and your eyes lead you. It is an obscure sentence, and perhaps something has been lost from the text. But there seems little doubt that the earlier superstitions connected with the tassels are referred to.

[1] Used in Ex. xxviii. 36, xxxix. 30, Lev. viii. 9 of the diadem (R.V. 'plate') on the high priest's forehead.

P Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the **16**
JE son of Levi, | with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab,

Chaps. XVI.—XVIII.

The rebellion of Dathan and Abiram. The self-assertion of Korah and his followers, and the status and rights of the Levites.

In chs. i. 47—54, iii., iv., viii. the separation of the Levites for divine service, and their duties, have been described. But their privileged position is now emphasized by two narratives—the self-assertion of Korah (ch. xvi.) and the blossoming of Aaron's staff as representative of the tribe of Levi (ch. xvii.). And the rank and dues of priests and Levites respectively are detailed (ch. xviii.).

But ch. xvi. contains a fusion of more than one narrative. Notice that while Dathan and Abiram with their followers were swallowed up in the earth (*vv.* 31—34), Korah's 250 princes were burnt with fire (*v.* 35). Again, after addressing Korah and his company (*vv.* 5—11) Moses has still to send for Dathan and Abiram (*v.* 12). And lastly in xxvii. 3 Korah alone is referred to, and in Dt. xi. 6, Ps. cvi. 17 Dathan and Abiram alone are mentioned as being swallowed up.

Thus the story of Dathan and Abiram was originally quite distinct from that of Korah; and, as characteristics of language and expression shew, the former is from JE and the latter from P. In combining them, the compiler has joined Korah's name with those of Dathan and Abiram in *vv.* 1, 24, 27^a, and has added *v.* 32^b, but has done nothing else to fuse the two narratives. Ch. xvi. should therefore be read as follows:

JE *vv.* 1 (partly), 2^a, 12—15, 25—34.
P *vv.* 1 (partly), 2^b—11, 16—24, 35—50.

It will then be seen that the action of Dathan and Abiram was one of rebellion against Moses' authority as leader and sheikh of the community. They refused to come when he sent for them (*v.* 12), and complained that he had made himself a prince over them (*v.* 13). Korah's action, on the other hand, was an ecclesiastical offence; he maintained that the tribe of the Levites was not more sacred than all the other tribes of Israel; and of this ch. xvii. is the sequel.

But a further difficulty here presents itself. There are certain verses inserted in the narrative which are written from quite a different point of view; they deal with the superiority of the *priests* to the Levites. These verses are 8—11, 16, 17, 36—40, and the genealogy of Korah from Levi in *v.* 1. Korah and his followers are here represented as Levites who wrongly claim the privileges of priests, while in the rest of the chapter they are laymen who wrongly claim the privileges of the Levites (see on xxvii. 3). The verses must belong to a time when Levites had become inferior to the priests who were descended in a direct line from Aaron.

xvi. **1. and** *Dathan and Abiram*] These words are from the opening of the JE narrative, and the verb which belongs to them is 'rose up' in *v.* 2.

2 and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, | took *men*: | and *JE P*
they rose up before Moses, | with certain of the children of *P*
Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the congregation,
3 called to the assembly, men of renown: and they assembled
themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and
said unto them, [1]Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the
congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is
among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above
4 the assembly of the LORD? And when Moses heard it, he
5 fell upon his face: and he spake unto Korah and unto all
his company, saying, In the morning the LORD will shew
who are his, and who is holy, and [2]will cause him to come
near unto him: even him whom he shall choose will he
6 cause to come near unto him. This do; take you censers,

[1] Heb. *It is enough for you* [2] Or, *whom he will cause to come near*

and On, the son of Peleth] The name On does not appear again in the narrative, or anywhere else in the O.T. In xxvi. 8 f. Dathan and Abiram are called sons of Eliab the son of *Pallu*. If Peleth is a corruption of Pallu, 'and On' (ואון)[1] may have arisen from an accidental repetition of אב, the last three consonants of Eliab; in which case the words should run *the* **sons** *of Eliab* **the son of Pallu**, *sons of Reuben*.

took men] In the Heb. the object of the verb is absent, and it is unlikely that 'men' is the right word to be supplied. Perhaps read ויקם for ויקח, 'and Korah rose up,' in which case the beginning of the Korah narrative corresponds to the beginning of the other narrative.

2. *called to the assembly*] Selected from the congregation to meet in assembly. LXX. σύνκλητοι βουλῆς explains that they met to give counsel.

3. *Ye take too much upon you*] lit. Enough for you! 'Your overweening claims have gone far enough!'

5. *the Lord will shew who are his*] LXX. ἔγνω ὁ Θεὸς τοὺς ὄντας αὐτοῦ ('God knoweth those who are his') is quoted in 2 Tim. ii. 19, with the substitution of Κύριος for Θεός.

and will cause him &c.] R.V. marg. is less probable.

6, 7. Korah and his followers are challenged to test their claim to equality with the Levites (represented by Moses and Aaron) by undergoing a species of ordeal, viz. to perform a sacred priestly function and see what will happen.

6. *censers*] **fire-pans.** So R.V. in Ex. xxvii. 3. An instrument for carrying burning coals. These fire-pans were not the sacred utensils of the Tabernacle, which would never be taken out of the Tabernacle precincts, but the private property of the 250 men; see on *v.* 37.

[1] Before the final ן came into use the letter נ would be easily written for ב, and the letters י and ן are frequently interchanged.

P Korah, and all his company; and put fire therein, and put 7
incense upon them before the LORD to-morrow: and it
shall be that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he *shall*
be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. |
P_2 And Moses said unto Korah, Hear now, ye sons of Levi: 8
seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel 9
hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring
you near to himself; to do the service of the tabernacle of
the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister
unto them; and that he hath brought thee near, and all thy 10
brethren the sons of Levi with thee? and seek ye the
priesthood also? Therefore thou and all thy company are 11
gathered together against the LORD: and Aaron, what is he
JE that ye murmur against him? | And Moses sent to call 12
Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab: and they said, We
will not come up: is it a small thing that thou hast brought 13
us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us

7. Enough! *ye sons of Levi*] These words cannot be addressed to Korah's company, since they are laymen who are objecting to the claims of the Levites. They must be addressed by Korah's company to Moses and Aaron, and have fallen out of their right place, which was probably at the end of *v.* 3. Their defiance thus begins and ends with the same words, as in the case of Dathan and Abiram (*vv.* 12, 14).

8—11. In these verses Korah's company, represented as Levites, claim the privileges of the priesthood (see prelim. note to the chapter).

9. seemeth it but *a small thing unto you*] **is it too small a thing for you.** Korah's company already possessed the great privilege of being separated from the other tribes for divine service; and with that they ought to be satisfied.

11. *and Aaron, what is he* &c.] i.e. What has he done to cause your murmuring? God, and not Aaron, is responsible for the superiority in which the priests stand to the Levites; cf. Ex. xvi. 8^b.

12—15. The civil rebellion of Dathan and Abiram against Moses' leadership.

12. *Moses sent to call*] Some tribal dispute or difficulty had probably occurred which required the leader's intervention; and when Moses sent for the persons concerned, they took the opportunity to start a rebellion against him, by refusing to answer the summons.

We will not come up] For 'come up' used of going to a superior or a judge cf. Gen. xlvi. 31, Dt. xxv. 7, Jud. iv. 5.

13. *out of a land flowing with milk and honey*] The expression which Moses had applied to Canaan in persuading the people to escape from slavery (Ex. iii. 17) is applied by the rebels ironically to Egypt.

in the wilderness, but thou must needs make thyself also a *JE*
14 prince over us? Moreover thou hast not brought us into a
land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance
of fields and vineyards: wilt thou [1]put out the eyes of these
15 men? we will not come up. And Moses was very wroth,
and said unto the LORD, Respect not thou their offering: I
have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one
16 of them. | And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy *P*
congregation before the LORD, thou, and they, and Aaron,
17 to-morrow: and take ye every man his censer, and put
incense upon them, and bring ye before the LORD every
man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers; thou also,
18 and Aaron, each his censer. | And they took every man his *P*
censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and
stood at the door of the tent of meeting with Moses and
19 Aaron. And Korah assembled all the congregation against
them unto the door of the tent of meeting: and the glory of
the LORD appeared unto all the congregation.
20 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, say-
21 ing, Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that

[1] Heb. *bore out*

14. *wilt thou* bore *out the eyes of these men?*] A strong figure which means, metaphorically, to blind them by false promises. Gray (*Numb.* p. 200) compares the English expression 'to throw dust in the eyes.'

15. *their offering*] This refers, apparently, 'to the sacrifice which every Israelite might offer for his household and may be compared with Gen. iv. 4 f.... The writer is not thinking of any special priesthood, but simply takes it for granted that Yahwè, whose favour was always sought by sacrifice, will not accept the offering of rebels against just authority' (Addis).

16—19. Korah and his company accept Moses' challenge.

16, 17 are a repetition of *vv.* 6, 7, and were probably inserted together with *vv.* 8—11, 36—40.

19. *Korah assembled all the congregation*] He was upholding the claims of the whole of Israel against the Levites, so he brought them to witness the test.

against them] This perhaps implies that all Israel as a whole favoured Korah; and this would explain God's words in *v.* 21.

20—24. Jehovah threatens to destroy the whole congregation; but at Moses' intercession He relents, and commands them to depart from the Tabernacle, leaving Korah and his company to be destroyed.

P I may consume them in a moment. And they fell upon 22
their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all
flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the
congregation? And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 23
Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about 24
JE the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. | And Moses 25
rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders
of Israel followed him. And he spake unto the congrega- 26
tion, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these
wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be con-
sumed in all their sins. So they gat them up from the 27
tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side:
and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood at the door of
their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little
ones. And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the 28
LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for *I have* not
done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common 29
death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of
all men; then the LORD hath not sent me. But if the 30

22. *the God of the spirits of all flesh*] The God who made and sustains the life of every human being. In early days Jehovah was thought of as the particular deity of Israel alone. But by the time of the priestly writer the nation had long advanced to the deeper and truer conception of monotheism.

shall one man sin] i.e. Korah. The words very clearly imply that Dathan and Abiram do not belong to the narrative.

24. *the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*] This strange expression, which recurs in *v.* 27, has resulted from the combination of the narratives. The test is arranged at the door of the sacred Tent of Jehovah (*vv.* 18, 19), and all the congregation are assembled there. The word 'tabernacle' (*mishkān*) is never used of ordinary human dwellings[1]. And the singular here would imply that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram all lived in the same tent, which is negatived by *v.* 26. The original reading must either have been simply 'the tabernacle' or more probably *the tabernacle* **of Jehovah**.

25—34. The destruction of Dathan and Abiram.

26. *lest ye be* **swept away** *in all their sins*] Perhaps an allusion to the form of death which awaited them. In *v.* 21 'consume' represents a different Heb. word.

27. *the tabernacle of Korah* &c.] Read *the tabernacle of* **Jehovah**. See on *v.* 24.

[1] Except in the plural in one poetical passage, xxiv. 5.

LORD [1]make a new thing, and the ground open her mouth, *JE*
and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them,
and they go down alive into [2]the pit; then ye shall under-
31 stand that these men have despised the LORD. And it
came to pass, as he made an end of speaking all these
words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them:
32 and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up,
and their households, and all the men that appertained unto
33 Korah, and all their goods. So they, and all that apper-
tained to them, went down alive into [2]the pit: and the
earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the
34 assembly. And all Israel that were round about them fled
at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us
35 up. | And fire came forth from the LORD and devoured the *P*
two hundred and fifty men that offered the incense.
36 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto *P*$_2$
37 Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, that he take up the
censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder;
38 for they are holy; even the censers of [3]these sinners against

[1] Heb. *create a creation* [2] Heb. *Sheol*
[3] Or, *these men who have sinned at the cost of their lives*

30. *into the pit*] *into* **Sheol**, the place of departed human beings. It was thought of as lying beneath the earth, or deep within it.

We are probably to think of the catastrophe as taking place in the form of an earthquake; or possibly the tradition may have grown up as a popular explanation of some deep fissure or chasm in the rocks.

32^{b}. *and all the men...their goods*] This half verse is the work of the compiler who combined the narratives. Korah's company of adherents ('the men that appertained unto K.') were not swallowed up in the earth; they died afterwards by fire (*v.* 35).

35. The sin of Korah's company was the same as that of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. x. 1, 2), and their punishment was the same. 'The gainsaying of Korah' is referred to as a typical sin in Jude 11.

36—40 [Heb. xvii. 1—15]. The fire-pans were made into a covering of the altar, as a memorial of the incident. As *v.* 40 shews, this section is written from the later point of view found in *vv.* 8—11, 16, 17. The writer who inserted them took the test of the fire-pans as proving the superiority of priests to Levites, not of Levites to laymen. (In the Heb. Bible *v.* 36 forms the beginning of ch. xvii.)

37. *out of the burning*] From the heap of burnt corpses.

for they are holy] These words probably belong to the next verse (see n. there). The fire-pans had previously been the private property

P_2 their own [1]lives, and let them be made beaten plates for a
covering of the altar: for they offered them before the
LORD, therefore they are holy: and they shall be a sign
unto the children of Israel. And Eleazar the priest took 39
the brasen censers, which they that were burnt had offered;
and they beat them out for a covering of the altar: to be a 40
memorial unto the children of Israel, to the end that no
stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to
burn incense before the LORD; that he be not as Korah,
and as his company: as the LORD spake unto him by the
hand of Moses.

P But on the morrow all the congregation of the children 41
of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron,
saying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD. And it 42
came to pass, when the congregation was assembled against

[1] Or, *souls*

of the 250 princes (see on *v.* 6); but when they had once been employed for a sacred purpose, and had been in contact with sacred incense, they had acquired (according to a very wide-spread Semitic notion) a new quality of sacredness, which made it dangerous and wrong to use them in future for secular purposes. For this Semitic idea cf. xix. 21; Ez. xliv. 19, xlvi. 20; Lev. vi. 27; Hag. ii. 12 f.; Is. lxv. 5; and see art. 'Holiness' in *DB.* ii.

38. (om. *even*) *the* **fire-pans** *of these sinners* **at the cost of** *their lives*] R.V. marg. is an explanation of the R.V. But the latter is grammatically doubtful. LXX. has ὅτι ἡγίασαν τὰ πυρεῖα κ.τ.λ. ('because they made holy the fire-pans' &c.). Perhaps we should read 'for the fire-pans of these sinners *have become holy* at the cost &c.' Some have seen an allusion to these words in Heb. xii. 3, 'such contradiction of sinners against themselves' (Westcott and Hort's text).

for a covering of the altar] This must be the altar of burnt-offering, since the altar of incense was covered with gold, not with brass or bronze (Ex. xxx. 3, xxxvii. 26). But according to Ex. xxvii. 2, xxxviii. 2, the altar of burnt-offering was already covered with bronze at its original manufacture at Sinai. The passage is another indication that the priestly writings are not all from one pen, but contain divergent traditions and date from different periods.

40. *which is not of the seed of Aaron*] i.e. a priest, and not a Levite as Korah was (see note before *v.* 37).

41—50. The people murmured at the death of Korah's company, and were punished by a plague, which ceased when Aaron made atonement with incense.

In contrast to the action of the princes, the offering of incense by a duly qualified person is accepted by Jehovah.

Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tent *P*
of meeting: and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the
43 glory of the LORD appeared. And Moses and Aaron came
44 to the front of the tent of meeting. And the LORD spake
45 unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment. And they
46 fell upon their faces. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take thy censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and lay incense thereon, and carry it quickly unto the congregation, and make atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out
47 from the LORD; the plague is begun. And Aaron took as Moses spake, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on the incense, and made atonement for the people.
48 And he stood between the dead and the living; and the
49 plague was stayed. Now they that died by the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, besides them that
50 died about the matter of Korah. And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tent of meeting: and the plague was stayed.

17 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
2 the children of Israel, and take of them rods, one for each

46. *make atonement for them*] The offering of incense was an unusual way of making atonement; the shedding of blood was generally required. But since the sin had been the burning of incense, the means for its atonement was similar. Cf. the bronze serpent (xxi. 6—9). A converse application of the same principle is seen in the laws of retaliation—'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'

there is wrath gone out] lit. the *wrath has gone out*. The divine wrath is thought of almost as an emanation; it has, so to speak, an existence independent of Jehovah, as soon as it proceeds from Him. Cf. 2 Ch. xix. 2, where, however, 'wrath' is without the article.

49. *them that died about the matter of Korah*] i.e. the 250 princes. It should be noticed that the death of Korah himself is nowhere related in the chapter. *vv.* 24, 27[a] might seem to imply that Korah was about to be swallowed up in the earth with Dathan and Abiram; and this supposition is adopted by the writer of xxvi. 10. But apart from the critical reasons for distinguishing the narratives, and for reading 'the tabernacle of *Jehovah*' in *vv.* 24, 27, it would be very strange that Korah should have been separated from his adherents in their punishment. In the fusing of the two stories by the compiler, a statement of the personal fate of Korah fell out of the chapter.

P fathers' house, of all their princes according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod. And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of 3
Levi: for there shall be one rod for each head of their fathers' houses. And thou shalt lay them up in the tent of 4
meeting before the testimony, where I meet with you. And 5
it shall come to pass, that the man whom I shall choose, his rod shall bud: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against you. And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, 6
and all their princes gave him rods, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. And Moses laid 7
up the rods before the LORD in the tent of the testimony. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses went into 8

CHAP. XVII. [Heb. xvii. 16—28.]

The blossoming of Aaron's staff.

The challenge to Korah and his company to burn incense had produced results which should have proved conclusively that their overweening claim was wrong. But the congregation only murmured that Moses and Aaron had 'killed the people of Jehovah'; and a terrible punishment had been sent them for their murmuring. But now Jehovah arranges for a proof of the superiority of the Levites to the other tribes, more conclusive, if possible, than the last. In the arrangement of the camp there were thirteen tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh (the house of Joseph) being reckoned as two. Each of the tribes was represented by a chief, who was bidden to present a staff with his name inscribed upon it. And the superiority of the tribe of Levi was proved by the blossoming of the staff of Aaron its chief.

2. *rods*] **staves**. They were the official staves of the princes, symbols of their tribal authority, not fresh rods cut from trees, which might conceivably have blossomed in the ordinary course of nature.

3. *one* **staff** *for* **the head** *of their* **clans**] lit. 'their fathers' houses' as R.V. This apparently refers not to all the tribes but to the tribe of Levi with its three divisions or clans, the Gershonites, Kohathites, and Merarites. They were to have only one representative, i.e. Aaron.

4. All the staves were placed in front of the ark for that night.

6. *the* **staff** *of Aaron was* **in the midst of** *their* **staves**] We are perhaps to think of the thirteen staves as stuck into the ground and standing erect, Aaron's staff being the middle one.

8. Stories of the vegetation of dried sticks are not uncommon in legend.

Gray (*Numb.* p. 217) mentions that of 'Joseph of Arimathea's stick,

the tent of the testimony; and, behold, the rod of Aaron *P*
for the house of Levi was budded, and put forth buds, and
9 bloomed blossoms, and bare ripe almonds. And Moses
brought out all the rods from before the LORD unto all the
children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man
10 his rod. And the LORD said unto Moses, Put back the rod
of Aaron before the testimony, to be kept for a token
against the children of rebellion; that thou mayest make
an end of their murmurings against me, that they die not.
11 Thus did Moses: as the LORD commanded him, so did he.
12 And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying,
Behold, we perish, we are undone, we are all undone.
13 Every one that cometh near, that cometh near unto the
tabernacle of the LORD, [1]dieth: shall we perish all of us?
18 And the LORD said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons and

[1] Or, *shall die*

which placed in the ground of Weary-all hill, became the miraculous thorn of Glastonbury.' And he cites other instances.

10. *Put back the* **staff** *of Aaron*] Cf. Heb. ix. 4.

the **sons** *of rebellion*] A common Heb. idiom to express a quality or characteristic; cf. 2 S. iii. 34, vii. 10, xii. 6 (marg.); Prov. xxxi. 5 (marg.). 'House of rebellion' is found very frequently in Ezek. as a designation of the house of Israel.

12. *we* **expire**, *we* **perish**, *we all* **perish**] This and the following verse form a transition to ch. xviii., in which the Levites guard the Tent, lest any layman should perish by approaching it, as Korah and his company had attempted to do.

13. *shall we perish all of us?*] The exact force of the words is doubtful. They may mean 'Shall we completely come to an end by expiring?' of which R.V. is a correct paraphrase: or 'Shall we ever finish expiring?' i.e. 'can we ever be free from the danger of death' if we approach the Tent?

CHAP. XVIII.

The duties and the dues of priests and Levites.

1—7. The duties of priests and Levites. The priests are to have charge of the sanctuary, and the Levites are to help them; the latter, however, may not come into contact with the sacred utensils or the altar. No layman may approach on pain of death. The subject has already been treated in i. 50—53, iii. 5—10, 38; and the principle of the disabilities of laymen has been illustrated in ch. xvi.

1. *thy sons*] i.e. the priests. The expression was due to the post-

P thy fathers' house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood. And thy brethren also, the 2
tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou near with thee, that they may be [1]joined unto thee, and minister unto thee: but thou and thy sons with thee shall be before the tent of the testimony. And they shall keep thy charge, 3
and the charge of all the Tent: only they shall not come nigh unto the vessels of the sanctuary and unto the altar, that they die not, neither they, nor ye. And they shall 4
be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tent of meeting, for all the service of the Tent: and a stranger shall not come nigh unto you. And ye shall keep the charge of 5

[1] See Gen. xxix. 34.

exilic practice of all priests of tracing their descent genealogically to Aaron.

thy fathers' house] Here it means the whole tribe of Levi, exclusive of Aaron and the priests.

bear the iniquity of the sanctuary...of your priesthood] i.e. bear the *consequences* of the iniquity of allowing your priesthood, or the sanctuary committed to your charge, to be profaned.

2. *that they may be joined*] This is a play on words, similar to that in Gen. xxix. 34, the verb *lāwāh* (לָוָה) being employed to explain the word *Lēwī* 'Levite,' so that the latter is understood to denote 'one who is *joined* to the priests as a servant.' Whether this was the *original* meaning and derivation is doubtful.

shall be before the tent] shall preside over the tent. The preposition is not local, but comprises sacred duties both within the tent and outside in the court.

3. *keep thy charge*, &c.] see on iii. 7.

the vessels] The Heb. word is capable of wider use than the Engl. 'vessel'; it includes all the sacred utensils and furniture.

For the prohibition to come into contact with the sacred things cf. iv. 15.

neither they, nor ye] *they*, for breaking the law, and *ye* for permitting it.

4. *a stranger*] Heb. *zār*; anyone who is not a priest. See on i. 51.

5. *ye shall keep the charge* &c.] If *ye* includes both priests and Levites, then 'the sanctuary' is used in its widest sense to include the tent and the court and everything contained in them, which are to be guarded from the approach of laymen. But on the other hand *ye* may denote the priests only, and 'the sanctuary' will in that case mean everything from which the Levites were debarred; cf. *vv.* 3, 7.

the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar: that there be *P*
6 wrath no more upon the children of Israel. And I, behold,
I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the
children of Israel: to you they are a gift, given unto the
7 LORD, to do the service of the tent of meeting. And thou
and thy sons with thee shall keep your priesthood for every
thing of the altar, and for that within the veil; and ye shall
serve: I give you the priesthood as a service of gift: and
the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

8 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, And I, behold, I have

6. *a gift, given unto* **Jehovah**] See on iii. 9.

7. *shall keep your priesthood*] i.e. perform its distinctive duties.

within the veil] viz. the first hanging, at the entrance to the Holy Place. The Levites were debarred from entering any part of the tent, and from contact with the altar of burnt-offering in the court.

as a service of gift] The expression (if the text be correct) emphasizes the fact that the priests had done nothing to *deserve* these privileges; they were a free gift. The LXX. suggest a different reading —'Ye shall perform the acts of service (as a) gift of your priesthood'; but the meaning is substantially the same. S. Paul gives similar teaching with regard to Christian privileges, 1 Cor. iv. 7.

8—20. *The priests' dues.* These are as follows: (*a*) All meal-, sin-, and guilt-offerings, with the exception of those parts which are burnt on the altar, i.e. given to God. These may be eaten by any *male* member of the priestly families 'in a very holy place' (*vv.* 9, 10). (*b*) Those portions of a 'gift' (i.e. a peace-offering) which are not eaten by the worshipper himself, nor given to God by being burnt on the altar; the priests' portions thus consisted of the 'contribution,' including that part of it called the 'wave-offering.' These may be eaten by any member, male *or female*, of the priestly families, who is free from ceremonial pollution (*v.* 11). The fact that females might eat it implies that it might be eaten anywhere outside the sacred precincts, into which no female was admitted. (*c*) All the best of the fresh oil, wine, and corn (further defined as 'the first' of them), and the first-ripe fruits. These may be eaten by the same persons as in (*b*) (*vv.* 12, 13). (*d*) Every 'devoted' thing (*v.* 14). (*e*) The first-born of all clean cattle (*v.* 15[a]), with the exception of the blood and fat which were given to God (*v.* 17). (*f*) The five shekels paid for the redemption of the first-born of men, and the redemption price (amount not stated) of the first-born of unclean beasts (*vv.* 15[b], 16).

8. A general statement that all the holy things of Israel are the property of the priests. This is afterwards limited by the regulations in the following verses.

given thee the charge of mine heave offerings, even all the
hallowed things of the children of Israel, unto thee have I
given them [1]by reason of the anointing, and to thy sons, as
a due for ever. This shall be thine of the most holy things, 9
reserved from the fire: every oblation of theirs, even every
meal offering of theirs, and every sin offering of theirs, and
every guilt offering of theirs, which they shall render unto
me, shall be most holy for thee and for thy sons. As the 10
most holy things shalt thou eat thereof: every male shall eat
thereof; it shall be holy unto thee. And this is thine; the 11
heave offering of their gift, even all the wave offerings of
the children of Israel: I have given them unto thee, and to
thy sons and to thy daughters with thee, as a due for ever:
every one that is clean in thy house shall eat thereof. All 12

[1] Or, *for a portion*

the charge of **my contributions**] i.e. the contributions made to me. See on v. 9. If 'the charge' (the ordinary rendering of the Heb. *mishmereth*) is correct, the expression must mean 'the duty of taking care that the contributions are not profaned through being eaten by non-priestly persons.' But it is better to render **that which is kept** *of my contributions*, i.e. that portion of the sacrifice which is not burnt, but reserved to be eaten. This concrete force of the word *mishmereth* is unique, but not impossible.

by reason of the anointing] The marg. **for a portion** is correct. In Lev. vii. 35 a word from the same root is rendered 'anointing-portion,' but it is doubtful if it has any connexion with the root *māshaḥ* which signifies 'anoint.'

9. The portions '[reserved] from the fire' on the altar were a 'handful' or a small undefined quantity of the meal-offerings (Lev. ii. 2, 9, 16, v. 12, vi. 15), and in the case of animal offerings certain portions of the fat (described in Lev. iii. 3—5, vii. 3—5). The blood, which represented the sacred life of the animal, was never eaten, but was poured out.

10. *As the most holy things*] An improbable rendering, since the sacrifices in question have just been described (*v.* 9) by the term 'the most holy things.' Render: **in a most holy place.** This evidently denotes the court of the tabernacle (cf. Lev. vi. 16, 26, vii. 6), though it usually stands for the innermost shrine.

11. *the* **contribution from** *their gift*] The portions of the peace-offering which were contributed to the priest, i.e. the breast and the right thigh.

and *all the wave-offerings*] i.e. *including* that part of the contribution—the breast—which was waved. For the ceremony of waving see on v. 25.

the [1]best of the oil, and all the [1]best of the vintage, and of *P*
the corn, the firstfruits of them which they give unto the
13 LORD, to thee have I given them. The firstripe fruits of all
that is in their land, which they bring unto the LORD, shall
be thine; every one that is clean in thy house shall eat
14 thereof. Every thing devoted in Israel shall be thine.
15 Every thing that openeth the womb, of all flesh which they
offer unto the LORD, both of man and beast, shall be thine:
nevertheless the firstborn of man shalt thou surely redeem,
16 and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem. [2]And
those that are to be redeemed of them from a month old
shalt thou redeem, according to thine estimation, for the
money of five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary (the
17 same is twenty gerahs). But the firstling of an ox, or the
firstling of a sheep, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not

[1] Heb. *fat* [2] Or, *And as to their redemption money, from a month old shalt thou redeem them*

12. *the best*] lit. 'the fat' (as marg.). Cf. Dt. xxxii. 14, Ps. lxxxi. 16. This vague expression is explained by the more technical term *the firstfruits*, or *the* **first** (Heb. *rêshîth*); cf. Dt. xviii. 4. The amount which the priest is to receive is not stated; but in later times fixed proportions were laid down by the chiefs of the Rabbinic schools.

13. *The firstripe fruits...which they bring unto* **Jehovah**] The latter clause shews that only a part of the firstfruits was offered; but the proportions, as in the case of the *rêshîth*, are not stated. For a full discussion of the subject reference may be made to Gray, *Numbers*, pp. 224—9.

14. *Every thing devoted*] Heb. *hêrem*. An object placed under a *hêrem* or ban was wholly given up to God and could not be redeemed. Gold and silver or other valuable articles might be captured in war, and similarly animals and human beings. The last are obviously excluded in the present regulation. Possibly the regulation is confined to such objects as were 'devoted' voluntarily by private individuals.

15. *of all flesh which they offer*] i.e. clean animals, for they alone could be offered.

16. *And* **as to his redemption money**, *from a month*, &c.] The pronoun 'his' refers to the firstborn of men, who were redeemed from death by 5 shekels. The price for the firstborn of unclean animals varied according to the priests' valuation (Lev. xxvii. 11 f., 27).

from a month old] i.e. directly the age of a month has been reached, and so it practically means '*at* a month old.'

the shekel of the sanctuary] See on iii. 47.

P redeem; they are holy: thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat for an offering made by fire, for a sweet savour unto the LORD. And the flesh 18
of them shall be thine, as the wave breast and as the right thigh, it shall be thine. All the heave offerings of the holy 19
things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, as a due for ever: it is a covenant of salt for ever before the LORD unto thee and to thy seed with thee. And 20
the LORD said unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any portion among them: I am thy portion and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

And unto the children of Levi, behold, I have given all 21
the tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their

18. *the flesh of them shall be thine*] Aaron is to receive the *whole* of their flesh, as he had received the breast and thigh of the peace-offering.

19. *a covenant of salt*] In primitive days the eating of salt, or of the smallest portion of food belonging to another man, constituted a sacred bond of friendship. So the expression denotes 'a covenant which cannot be broken.' On the Hebrew ideas of a covenant see the writer's *Exodus*, pp. 150—4.

20. The reason why the priests are to receive all these dues is that they are to possess no landed property in Canaan. Cf. xxvi. 62, Jos. xiv. 3. This ordinance, however, did not exclude the assignment of certain cities, with their surrounding land, to the priests and Levites (xxxv. 1—8, Jos. xxi. 1—42).

21—24. *The Levites' dues.* These consisted in tithe levied on agricultural produce only (cf. *vv.* 27, 30).

This was similarly assigned to the Levitical priests in the earlier law contained in Dt. xiv. 22—29, xxvi. 12—15. But the present regulation is in advance of that in Dt. in that it assigns the tithe to the Levites absolutely. According to Dt. the Levite shared it, in two years out of three, with the offerer and his household, and in the third year with the poor—'sojourners, widows, and orphans.' This variety led in post-Biblical times to the imposition of *two* tithes (cf. Tob. i. 7 ff.). In Lev. xxvii. 30—33, 2 Ch. xxxi. 6 (which are probably later than the present passage) mention is made of a fresh demand, viz. a tithe on cattle, which is found nowhere else in the O.T. In early days the 'clergy' were poor and humble persons who needed support from the charity of the rich. The contributions paid to them were at first small, and probably variable; the officials at the important sanctuaries, for example, would receive larger dues than those in country villages.

service which they serve, even the service of the tent of *P*
22 meeting. And henceforth the children of Israel shall not
come nigh the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin, and die.
23 But the Levites shall do the service of the tent of meeting,
and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute for
ever throughout your generations, and among the children
24 of Israel they shall have no inheritance. For the tithe of
the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering
unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites for an inherit-
ance: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children
of Israel they shall have no inheritance.
25 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Moreover
26 thou shalt speak unto the Levites, and say unto them,
When ye take of the children of Israel the tithe which I
have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye
shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, a tithe of
27 the tithe. And your heave offering shall be reckoned unto
you, as though it were the corn of the threshing-floor, and
28 as the fulness of the winepress. Thus ye also shall offer an
heave offering unto the LORD of all your tithes, which ye
receive of the children of Israel; and thereof ye shall give
29 the LORD'S heave offering to Aaron the priest. Out of all
your gifts ye shall offer every heave offering of the LORD,
of all the [1]best thereof, even the hallowed part thereof out
30 of it. Therefore thou shalt say unto them, When ye heave
the [1]best thereof from it, then it shall be counted unto the

[1] Heb. *fat*

But when, after the Exile, the priests and Levites advanced to a high position in the community, their demands gradually increased, until they became the grasping and avaricious rulers that we see in the Hasmoneans and the Sadducees.

In Heb. vii. 5 the payment of tithes by Israel is part of the argument that the Aaronic priesthood is inferior to that of Christ.

25—32. *A further payment to the priests.* The tithe of the crops belongs so entirely to the Levites that it is considered a source of property from which they in turn must pay a tithe to the priests.

27. *your heave-offering*] *your* **contribution**, which you must make to the priests.

as *the corn of the threshing-floor*] In the same way that all Israel give to you a tithe of corn and wine, so shall ye give a tithe of that tithe to the priests.

30. The regulation may be paraphrased as follows: When ye shall

P Levites as the increase of the threshing-floor, and as the increase of the winepress. And ye shall eat it in every 31
place, ye and your households: for it is your reward in return for your service in the tent of meeting. And ye shall 32
bear no sin by reason of it, when ye have heaved from it the [1]best thereof: and ye shall not profane the holy things of the children of Israel, [2]that ye die not.

And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, 19
saying, This is the statute of the law which the LORD hath 2
commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that

[1] Heb. *fat* [2] Or, *neither shall ye die*

have contributed [as a tithe] the best part from it [i.e. from the tithe which you have received], then it [the remaining nine-tenths] shall be for your own use, just as the rest of Israel use their corn and wine after contributing a tithe of it to you.

31. *in every place*] Not in a holy place, but anywhere, as ordinary food for your households.

32. *profane the holy things*] i.e. the tithe of the tithe, which they would profane if they did not give it to the priests.

CHAP. XIX.

Purification by the ashes of a red cow.

The chapter is an isolated section of priestly writing, having no connexion with the narrative of Korah and the privileges of priests and Levites (xvi.—xviii.), nor with the following narrative of the events at Kadesh (xx.). The regulations fall into two parts: (1) *vv.* 1—13. The ingredients and effects of the purifying water in cases of pollution arising from contact with a dead body. (2) *vv.* 14—22. An expanded, and stricter, form of *vv.* 11—13, probably by a different hand.

The principle that contact with the dead causes pollution is primitive and wide-spread. Gray (*Numb.* 243 f.) gives instances from America, Africa, and Asia, and from ancient Greece and Rome. The particular method enjoined in this chapter for removing the pollution, though the chapter in its present form is the work of P, must have been based upon primitive usage. A red cow, which has no blemish and which has never been yoked, is to be brought to Eleazar and then led outside the camp and killed (*vv.* 2, 3). Eleazar is to sprinkle some of the blood seven times in the direction of the front (the Eastern end) of the Tent (*v.* 4); in his sight the cow, with all its parts complete, is to be burnt (*v.* 5); and upon the burning carcase he is to throw cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet thread (*v.* 6). The ashes mixed with water are to be used as the 'water of impurity' (*v.* 9), with which are to be sprinkled any persons who incur pollution by contact with the dead (*vv.* 11—13).

they bring thee a red heifer [1]without spot, wherein is no P
3 blemish, *and* upon which never came yoke: and ye shall
give her unto Eleazar the priest, and he shall bring her
forth without the camp, and one shall slay her before his
4 face: and Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his
finger, and sprinkle of her blood toward the front of the
5 tent of meeting seven times: and one shall burn the heifer
in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with
6 her dung, shall he burn: and the priest shall take cedar
wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of
7 the burning of the heifer. Then the priest shall wash his
clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward
he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be un-
8 clean until the even. And he that burneth her shall wash
his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall

[1] Or, *perfect*

This law is referred to in xxxi. 19—24; and in Heb. ix. 13 f. a contrast is drawn between 'the ashes of an heifer' which purify the flesh, and the blood of Christ which purifies the conscience from 'dead works.' The use of the 'water of impurity' was not universal in Israel, for cases of pollution by the dead are dealt with by other means; see Lev. v. 2, 5—13 (unwitting contact with a dead animal), xi. 24—28 (contact with the carcase of an unclean animal), xxii. 4—6 (the pollution of a priest who touches anything that is already polluted by the dead), Num. vi. 6—12 (the pollution of a Nazirite by touching the dead).

2. *a red heifer*] *a red* **cow**. The Heb. word is that ordinarily used for the full-grown animal (e.g. Gen. xli. 2—4; 1 S. vi. 7). The reason for the particular colour is not known. The red animal and the scarlet thread may both, perhaps, have had reference to blood as an instrument of purification.

without spot] **perfect**. Any blemish, such as lameness, blindness, or the malformation of a limb, would disqualify it.

3. *and* **one** *shall bring her forth*] Probably the person who is to kill her; not Eleazar.

6. *cedar wood, and hyssop*] The former, perhaps, for its durability, the latter for its cleansing qualities. It is doubtful, however, if 'hyssop' is the true rendering of the Heb. *'ēzōbh*, since the hyssop is not native to Palestine. The 'caper' and the 'marjoram' have been suggested.

In the purification of the leper the same objects are employed, but with a different purpose. The cedar wood and *'ēzōbh*, bound together by a scarlet thread, formed an instrument for sprinkling blood upon the recovered leper and his house (Lev. xiv. 4, 6, 49, 51). See *v.* 18 below.

P be unclean until the even. And a man that is clean shall 9
gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without
the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the con-
gregation of the children of Israel for a water of [1]separation:
it is a sin offering. And he that gathereth the ashes of the 10
heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even:
and it shall be unto the children of Israel, and unto the
stranger that sojourneth among them, for a statute for ever.
He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean 11
seven days: the same shall purify himself therewith on the 12
third day, [2]and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if
he purify not himself the third day, [3]then the seventh day he
shall not be clean. Whosoever toucheth the dead body of 13
any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth
the tabernacle of the LORD; and that soul shall be cut
off from Israel: because the water of separation was not
sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is
yet upon him. This is the law when a man dieth in a tent: 14
every one that cometh into the tent, and every one that
is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days. And every 15

[1] Or, *impurity* [2] Or, *and on the seventh day*, so *shall he be clean*
[3] Or, *and*

9. *it shall be kept*] i.e. the ashes, for which the Heb. word is singular, not plural.

a water of **impurity**] i.e. a water for the removal of impurity. Cf. 'water of sin' (viii. 7). The word *niddāh*, 'impurity,' signifies something loathsome or abominable.

it is a sin-offering] The cow (not the water) could be called a *sin-offering* because it was burnt; but, since the ashes are the object of chief importance, the word *hattā'th* ('sin-offering') must be understood in the more general sense of 'something which removes sin.' LXX. ἁγνισμα.

12. *therewith*] with the 'water of impurity.'

It is clear that the writer of *v.* 19 understood the sprinkling to have been performed *twice*. But in this verse, according to R.V., it is performed only on the third day. R.V. marg. is probably, therefore, to be preferred in both its renderings; and the verse means that the polluted man must purify himself *on the third day* **and** *the seventh day;* he shall be clean in that case, but not otherwise.

14—22. A second use of the 'water of impurity.'

Mere presence under the same roof as the dead, without actual contact, causes defilement.

open vessel, which hath no covering bound upon it, is *P*
16 unclean. And whosoever in the open field toucheth one
that is slain with a sword, or a dead body, or a bone of
17 a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. And for
the unclean they shall take of the ashes of the burning of
the sin offering, and [1]running water shall be put thereto in a
18 vessel: and a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in
the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the
vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon
him that touched the bone, or the slain, or the dead, or the
19 grave: and the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean
on the third day, and on the seventh day: and on the
seventh day he shall purify him; and he shall wash his
clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at
20 even. But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not
purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from the midst
of the assembly, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of
the LORD: the water of separation hath not been sprinkled
21 upon him; he is unclean. And it shall be a perpetual
statute unto them: and he that sprinkleth the water of

[1] Heb. *living*

16. *or a grave*] The thought of defilement from unwitting contact with a grave underlies our Lord's denunciation of the Pharisees in Luke xi. 44.

17. *the sin-offering*] The word is used in the same sense as in *v.* 9.

running water] Water fresh from a running stream. This is more explicit than the former account, in which (*v.* 9) the mixing of water with the ashes is taken for granted.

18. The *'ēzōbh* ('hyssop') is not mentioned in this section as being burnt; it is here used as an instrument for sprinkling: see *v.* 6.

19. *he shall wash his clothes* &c.] The defiled person must do this after having been sprinkled. This is absent from the law in *v.* 12.

21. The man who sprinkles the sacred water becomes 'unclean'; and in the next clause it is stated more generally that the man who touches it becomes unclean. The uncleanness in this case is slight; it lasts until the evening and can be removed by simply washing the clothes. Gray cites a Buddhist parallel from Max Müller, *Sacred Books of the East*, ii. 250. A close connexion existed in the Semitic mind between 'uncleanness' and 'holiness.' 'Holiness' or 'sacredness' was a contagious quality which debarred its possessor from ordinary intercourse with others until the contagion had been removed. Inanimate objects could also receive the contagion: see on xvi. 37.

P separation shall wash his clothes; and he that toucheth the water of separation shall be unclean until even. And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean; and the soul that toucheth it shall be unclean until even. 22

And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, 20
E came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month: | and the

Chap. XX.

Five events at the close of the forty years wanderings.

v. 1[a], arrival at the wilderness of Zin (P); *v.* 1[b], the death of Miriam (E); *vv.* 2—13, the striking of the rock at Meribah (P); *vv.* 14—21, permission to pass through Edom refused (JE); *vv.* 22—29, the death of Aaron (P).

It is clear that the chapter deals with events at the *close* of the wanderings and not earlier, for (1) Moses could not have asked permission to pass straight through Edom in order to enter Canaan until the period of wandering commanded by God was over; (2) Aaron's death at Mt Hor occurred, according to xxxiii. 38, in the 40th year after the Exodus, the wilderness of Zin being the previous stopping-place (xxxiii. 36). But this chapter is the sequel of ch. xiv., the intervening chs. xv.—xix. being miscellaneous priestly material assigned to no definite time or place. In ch. xiv. it is related that the people were condemned to wander 40 years, and failed in an immediate attempt to enter Canaan from the south. The history, therefore, from the beginning till near the end of the 40 years is a blank in the book of Numbers. It is not even clear in what locality these years were spent. When the spies were sent out (xiii. 26) the people were at Kadesh (JE) = Wilderness of Paran (P). In xiv. 25 (JE) they were commanded to go 'into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea.' Whether they went for a long or a short time is not stated. In xx. 1 we read that they 'came into the wilderness of Zin' (P), and 'the people abode in Kadesh' (JE). The 40 years were thus spent *either* in a short stay in the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea, followed by a long stay at Kadesh, *or* a long stay in the former followed by a short stay in the latter. But the traditions as to the wanderings were indefinite; and a widely different account is found in Dt., where it is stated that after the defeat at Hormah Israel stayed at Kadesh 'many days' (Dt. i. 46), then they turned back 'into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea,' and 'compassed Mt Seir [Edom] many days' (Dt. ii. 1). It is not clear from these passages what length of time the 'many days' at Kadesh represents. But Dt. ii. 14 states explicitly that 38 years had been spent in journeying from Kadesh to the borders of Moab, nothing being said of any return to Kadesh during that time.

Thus, to sum up, in Num. the 40 years either precede or correspond to the stay at Kadesh mentioned in xx. 1, while in Dt. they were spent,

people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was *E*
2 buried there. | And there was no water for the congregation: *P*
and they assembled themselves together against Moses and
3 against Aaron. And the people strove with Moses, and
spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our
4 brethren died before the LORD! And why have ye brought
the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we should
5 die there, we and our cattle? And wherefore have ye made
us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil
place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of
6 pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink. And
Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly
unto the door of the tent of meeting, and fell upon their
7 faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them. And
8 the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and
assemble the congregation, thou, and Aaron thy brother,
and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, that it give

after the departure from Kadesh, in moving round the south and east of Edom to Moab. The punishment of the 40 years wandering is referred to in Acts vii. 36, xiii. 18, and the death of the people in the wilderness in 1 Cor. x. 5, Jude 5.

1. *and Miriam died there*] At what period this took place is not stated. The event has no connexion with the following narrative.

2—13. *The striking of the rock at Meribah.* Many characteristics of language indicate that this is mainly the work of P. In Ex. xvii. 1—7 there is another account (E) of the striking of the rock, the place being similarly named Meribah. It is probable that these are two traditions of the same event. In E it is placed at Horeb, early in the journeyings; here it is placed at their close. This two-fold striking of the rock appears to have influenced S. Paul's language in 1 Cor. x. 4. See on Num. xxi. 18.

3. *And the people strove*] The root of the verb (*rībh*) is also that of the word *Merībhāh* ('the place of strife'), the name of the place being thus explained by means of a play on words; cf. *v.* 13.

when our brethren died before **Jehovah**] in the revolt of Korah (ch. xvi.).

8. *Take the* **staff**] Moses here receives no directions as to what he is to do with the staff: perhaps some clauses which originally contained them have been lost. 'The staff' is spoken of as a definite well-known object. In E Moses is represented as using a staff given him by God (Ex. iv. 17, 20); but in P the staff is always *Aaron's* (Ex. vii. 9, 12, 19, 20 &c.). In *v.* 11 (below), according to the Heb. text. Moses struck the rock with '*his* rod'; but LXX. has '*the* rod.' במטהו is probably a late scribal error for במטה.

P forth its water; and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their cattle drink. And Moses took the rod from before the 9
LORD, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron 10
gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; shall we bring you forth water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and 11
smote the rock with his rod twice: and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their cattle. And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye 12
believed not in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them. These are the waters of 13
[1]Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he [2]was sanctified in them.

JE And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king 14

[1] That is, *Strife* [2] Or, *shewed himself holy*

the rock] There is at Kadesh (the modern 'Ain-el-Ḳadîs) a 'large single mass, or a small hill, of solid rock' described by Trumbull (*Kadesh-Barnea*, 272—4), who established the identity of the place.

10, 11. As in *v.* 8, part of the narrative seems to have been lost. The sin which Moses and Aaron committed is not clearly defined. In *v.* 10 they appear to shew *anger*; and that is alluded to in Ps. cvi. 32f. In *v.* 11 Moses is said to have struck the rock twice. He may have been commanded to strike only once, or to raise the staff (cf. Ex. viii. 5) and speak to the rock without striking. Whatever his sin was, the action of Moses *and Aaron* in these verses hardly corresponds to the expression 'rebelled against my word' in *v.* 24 (cf. xxvii. 14), and still less to unbelief (*v.* 12). The obscurity is increased by Dt. i. 37 (cf. iii. 26, iv. 21), where we read that Moses was forbidden to enter Canaan on account of the people's sin at the return of the spies, which occurred (like the present incident) at Kadesh, but 37 years earlier.

12. Had Moses and Aaron shewn a true faith they would have been the means of exhibiting God's holiness before the eyes of the people. By their unbelief they detracted from it.

13. *he was sanctified in them*] The verb is from the same root as that of Kadesh ('sacred'), and there is perhaps an intentional play on the name. The expression means 'he proved, or vindicated, himself as holy,' in spite of the sin of Moses and Aaron.

in them] Either in the waters, i.e. by his miracle in giving water, or, better, in the hearts of the people; cf. Ez. xxviii. 25.

14—21. *Permission to pass through Edom refused.*

The Edomites occupied territory to the south of the Dead Sea, west-

of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all *JE*
15 the travail that hath befallen us: how our fathers went
down into Egypt, and we dwelt in Egypt a long time; and
16 the Egyptians evil entreated us, and our fathers: and when
we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an
angel, and brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we
17 are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border: let us
pass, I pray thee, through thy land: we will not pass through
field or through vineyard, neither will we drink of the water
of the wells: we will go along the king's *high* way, we will
not turn aside to the right hand nor to the left, until we have
18 passed thy border. And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt
not pass through me, lest I come out with the sword against
19 thee. And the children of Israel said unto him, We will go
up by the high way: and if we drink of thy water, I and my
cattle, then will I give the price thereof: let me only, without
20 *doing* any thing *else*, pass through on my feet. And he said,
Thou shalt not pass through. And Edom came out against
21 him with much people, and with a strong hand. Thus Edom
refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore
Israel turned away from him.

22 And they journeyed from Kadesh: | and the children of *P*

ward as far as Kadesh (*v.* 16) and southward as far as the eastern arm of the Red Sea (xxi. 4). The Israelites having failed long before to enter Canaan from the south, did not attempt it again (see, however, n. on xxi. 1—3), but proposed to enter it from the east. And if they could pass straight through Edom, their route would be greatly shortened. Edom's refusal forced them to work round the south of the hostile country, and then northwards along its eastern border.

14. *thy brother Israel*] Edom was a Semitic tribe, closely connected with Israel by blood. In Gen. xxv. 21—26 Esau (= Edom) and Jacob (= Israel) are represented as twin brothers.

the travail] lit. 'the weariness'; the hardships of the long weary journey.

17. *the king's* **way**] A main trade-route through the country. In modern Palestine such a route is known by the name of *darb es-sultân* or 'Sultan's way.'

19. *without* doing *anything* else] lit. 'it is not a matter'; i.e. it is not a matter that can cause you any injury or annoyance; it is a mere nothing that we ask.

22—29. *The death of Aaron.*

P Israel, even the whole congregation, came unto mount Hor.
And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in mount Hor, 23
by the border of the land of Edom, saying, Aaron shall be 24
gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the
land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because
ye rebelled against my word at the waters of Meribah. Take 25
Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto mount
Hor: and strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon 26
Eleazar his son: and Aaron shall be gathered *unto his*
people, and shall die there. And Moses did as the LORD 27
commanded: and they went up into mount Hor in the
sight of all the congregation. And Moses stripped Aaron 28
of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and
Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and
Eleazar came down from the mount. And when all the 29
congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they wept for Aaron
thirty days, even all the house of Israel.

22. *mount Hor*] The site is unknown: but it is stated to be 'by the border of the land of Edom' (*v.* 23), and 'on the edge' of it (xxxiii. 37). In spite of this, tradition (found as early as Josephus and repeated by Jerome and Eusebius) places it near Petra; and this view is represented in the modern *Jebel Nebi Hārūn*, a mountain near Petra. But Petra lay some distance within the Edomite border, which stretched westward of the Arabah. *Jebel Madurah*, a mountain N.E. of Kadesh and a short distance south of the Dead Sea, suits the data in the text and is the best conjecture which has yet been made (Trumbull, *Kadesh-Barnea*, 127—139). If, however, the Israelites moved north-east from Kadesh, they did not move south-east towards the Red Sea (xxi. 4). See on xxi. 10, 11.

In Dt. x. 6 Aaron is related to have died not at Mt Hor but at *Mōsērāh* (Num. xxxiii. 30 f. *Mōsērōth*), of which nothing is known. It may perhaps have been situated in the neighbourhood of Mt Hor.

26. *his garments*] the official high-priest's vestments, with which Eleazar was robed, in token of his succession to the office; cf. Dt. x. 6.

CHAPS. XXI.—XXII. 1.

This chapter is full of difficulties, critical and geographical, about some of which it is impossible to reach any certain conclusions. It relates the journey to the steppes of Moab opposite Jericho, together with three victories—over the Canaanites (*vv.* 1—3), Sihon king of the Amorites (*vv.* 21—31), and Og the king of Bashan (*vv.* 33—35). The

21 And the Canaanite, the king of Arad, which dwelt in the *E*? South, heard tell that Israel came by the way [1]of Atharim;

[1] Or, *of the spies*

whole section is from JE, with the probable exception of *vv.* 1—3, 10, 11 and xxii. 1.

1—3. The attack made upon Israel by the Canaanites and Israel's victory over them at Hormah.

The source of this passage is a great problem. The verses appear to imply a movement on the part of the Israelites northwards from the desert through the Negeb. They have no connexion with *vv.* 4 ff., in which the people moved S.E. towards the Red Sea. And it is difficult to find any point in the narratives of the wanderings to which a northward movement with a successful battle can belong, on the supposition that the passage has been misplaced, and that it belongs to JE. Possibly, however, it is to be ascribed to E. It is contradictory to the account in xiv. 40—45 (J), where it is stated that the Israelites were defeated by the Canaanites at Hormah. It is noteworthy that Jud. i. 17 contains a narrative which is closely similar to the present one; it relates a victory over the Canaanites at Hormah, and (as here) the name Hormah is explained by a play on the word *ḥērem* 'a ban'; and Hormah, moreover, is mentioned in close conjunction with Arad. But the conquerors are not the whole of Israel but the tribes of Judah and Simeon, with whom the Kenites had moved into the district. It is far from impossible that the two passages are closely connected. In the present passage it is strange that the Israelites, after gaining such a decisive victory, should not have moved further northwards, and established themselves at once in Canaan. And an increasing number of modern students think that they actually did so, and that this passage is an isolated fragment from a circle of traditions according to which some of the Israelites did not travel round to Moab with the main body, but entered Canaan straight from the southern deserts. If that theory were correct, we should have to conclude that the victory which Jud. i. 17 ascribes to Judah and Simeon with the Kenites is, in the present form of the verses before us, ascribed less accurately to the whole of Israel.

1. *the Canaanite*] This is perhaps to be understood as a gentilic noun, denoting 'the Canaanites' collectively, in which case 'the king of Arad' is a later addition. The Canaanites are in the same territory in which they are found in xiv. 25 (see note there).

Arad] The modern *Tell 'Arad*. It lies 17 miles south of Hebron, and 50 miles north, and slightly to the east, of Kadesh. The king of Arad is mentioned in conjunction with the king of Hormah in Jos. xii. 14. And the 'Negeb of Arad' (i.e. that part of the Negeb in which Arad was situated) is identified in Jud. i. 16 with the wilderness of Judah, to which the Kenites moved in company with the tribes of Judah.

the way of Atharim] The meaning of the word is unknown, and

E? and he fought against Israel, and took some of them captive.
And Israel vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou 2
wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will
[1]utterly destroy their cities. And the LORD hearkened to 3
the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and
they [2]utterly destroyed them and their cities: and the name
of the place was called [3]Hormah.

JE And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way to the 4
Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the
people [4]was much discouraged [5]because of the way. And 5

[1] Heb. *devote* [2] Heb. *devoted* [3] From the same root as *herem*, a devoted thing [4] Or, *was impatient* Heb. *was shortened* [5] Or, *in*

perhaps it is safest to take it (with R.V.) as a proper name. R.V. marg. retains the rendering of A.V. 'the spies,' a suggestion derived from the Targum. Dillmann refers to an Arabic word *athar*, 'a footprint,' or 'trace,' and suggests that 'the way of Atharim' might mean 'the track-way,' i.e. 'the caravan route.'

2. *utterly destroy*] i.e. place under a 'ban,' Heb. *hērem*. In the next verse the writer plays upon the word, in order to explain the name Hormah, as is done also in Jud. i. 17 (see note above).

3. *the name of the place was called Hormah*] In view of the expression 'destroyed them and their cities,' Hormah would seem to be a district and not a town; and perhaps it is so in xiv. 45 ('the Hormah') and Dt. i. 44[1]. But in other passages Hormah is a city; cf. Jos. xii. 14, xv. 30, xix. 4, 1 S. xxx. 30, 1 Ch. iv. 30; and in Jud. i. 17 it is said that its former name was Zephath.

4—9. *The bronze serpent.* God did not at once take away the plague. Each individual received healing only when he performed an act of faith, by looking at the serpent. An early Jewish writer says that it was not the serpent that brought the Israelites healing, but the fact that they 'lifted up their eyes and directed their heart towards their heavenly Father.' This is one of the most familiar and famous of Biblical narratives, owing to our Lord's reference to it, in John iii. 14, as typical of the 'lifting up' of the Son of Man. The close connexion between the plague and the instrument of healing is, to the Christian, symbolical of the fact that 'Him who knew no sin he [God] made to be sin on our behalf' (2 Cor. v. 21). It was traditionally believed that the bronze serpent which Moses erected was the same which existed in Hezekiah's day. He destroyed it because it had long been an object of worship (2 K. xviii. 4).

4. *by the way to the Red Sea*] Throughout the whole of the detour no encampments are named until Israel reaches the region of Moab.

the soul of the people was **impatient**] lit. 'was short.' The opposite

[1] This is the more probable if we read '*from* Seir' with LXX., Syr., Vulg.

the people spake against God, and against Moses, Where- *JE*
fore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the
wilderness? for there is no bread, and there is no water;
6 and our soul loatheth this [1]light bread. And the LORD sent
fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people;
7 and much people of Israel died. And the people came to
Moses, and said, We have sinned, because we have spoken
against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD,
that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed
8 for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee
a fiery serpent, and set it upon a standard: and it shall come
to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he seeth it, shall
9 live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and set it upon
the standard: and it came to pass, that if a serpent had
bitten any man, when he looked unto the serpent of brass,
10 he lived. | And the children of Israel journeyed, and pitched *P*
11 in Oboth. And they journeyed from Oboth, and pitched at
Iye-abarim, in the wilderness which is before Moab, toward
12 the sunrising. | From thence they journeyed, and pitched in *JE*

[1] Or, *vile*

state is 'long-suffering'; cf. Prov. xiv. 29 (R.V. 'hasty' and 'slow to anger').

5. *our soul* [i.e. appetite] *loatheth this* **worthless** *bread*] They despised the manna, declaring that it was useless for satisfying hunger.

6. *fiery serpents*] The Heb. words are both substantives, and both have the article: 'the serpents, the fiery creatures.' If 'fiery' is the correct rendering, it probably refers to their venomous bite which produced a burning inflammation. The article may imply 'the serpents so well known to the readers by tradition.' The punishment by serpents is referred to in 1 Cor. x. 9 as a warning to Christians.

8. *a fiery serpent*] Here it is a single substantive, the second of the two in *v.* 6.

set it upon a **pole**] The rendering of the A.V. may here be retained.

9. *Moses made a serpent of* **bronze**] The removing of a pest by means of a bronze image of it finds parallels in ancient Europe. See Gray, *Numb.* p. 276.

VERSES 10, 11. P.

Stages in the journey to the east of Moab.

11. The site of Oboth is unknown; 'somewhere on the flinty plateau to the east of Edom, the Ard Suwwan or Flint Ground, Arabia Petraea'

JE the valley of Zered. From thence they journeyed, and pitched 13

(G. A. Smith, *H. G.* 557). Iye-abarim (Heb. '*Iyyê-hā'abhārīm*, 'the Ruins of the 'Abharim') is stated to lie 'over against Moab, on the sunrise (i.e. the eastern) side.' 'The '*Abharim*' means 'the parts on the other side,' a name which was given to the district on the east of the Dead Sea, looked at from the point of view of a dweller in Palestine: cf. xxvii. 12, xxxiii. 47 f. The name distinguishes it from the Iyim of Jos. xv. 29, which was in Judah, close to the Edomite border.

Many writers assign *vv.* 10, 11 to P, since the names Oboth and Iye-abarim recur in the list in ch. xxxiii., which is from the hand of a priestly writer, and are found nowhere else in the O.T. According to that list (*vv.* 41—44) the itinerary was as follows: Mt Hor, Zalmonah, Punon, Oboth, Iye-abarim. The sites of Zalmonah and Punon are quite unknown. But the writer of xxxiii., who clearly intends to trace the journey as completely as possible, omits all reference to the detour by the way to the Red Sea. If, therefore, Mt Hor is the modern Jebel Madurah (see on xx. 22) on the west of Edom, and Iye-abarim is somewhere on the eastern border of Moab, it seems probable that the priestly traditions represented Israel as marching straight through Edom. Whether the account of the hostility of the king of Edom was unknown to P, or whether it was, for some reason, intentionally omitted, we cannot say. But it is noteworthy that in Dt. also there is no mention of it.

Verses 12—20. JE.

The Israelites arrived at a spot on the S.E. border of Moab, and then, having travelled northwards along its eastern boundary, penetrated westward till they reached the cliffs which fall to the Dead Sea. Notice that the formula used in the itinerary has changed; in *vv.* 10, 11 it is 'and they journeyed from —— and encamped in ——,' as throughout ch. xxxiii.; but here it is 'from thence they journeyed, and encamped in ——,' or some shorter expression.

On the whole of this section see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geogr.* 557—66, and his article 'Moab' in *Enc. Bibl.*

12. *From thence they journeyed*] The last place mentioned in JE was 'the way to the Red Sea' (*v.* 4); but it is probable that some stages in the journey have been lost, and that 'thence' originally referred to a distinct town or locality.

the **wady** *of Zered*] The Heb. *naḥal* denotes both a small torrent and the depression through which it flows; the German 'Bachtal' expresses it well.

The name Zered has not been identified; if, however, the compiler was sufficiently acquainted with the geography of the district to place the names Oboth and Iye-abarim (from P) in their right position, Zered must lie to the north of the latter town, and may be either the Seil Sa'ideh which flows into the Arnon from the S.E., or the Seil Lejjûn a smaller tributary of the Seil Sa'ideh, or else the Wady-el-Kerak (or the

on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness, that *JE*
cometh out of the border of the Amorites: for Arnon is the
14 border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. Where-
fore it is said in the book of the Wars of the LORD,

upper course of it named Wady-el-Franji) which runs north-west past Kerak into the Dead Sea.

13. *on the other side of Arnon*] This probably means north of it, the direction being considered from the point of view of the march; cf. Jud. xi. 18.

The Arnon, now known as the Wady-el-Mojib, was a large stream which flowed westward into the Dead Sea at about the middle point of its eastern side. For a fuller description see on *v.* 14.

which is in the wilderness] i.e. that part of it which is in the wilderness. The clause defines more exactly one of the many streams which compose the river, perhaps the Wady Wāleh which flows into it from the north about 4½ miles from its mouth (see *Enc. Bibl.* 3170 note 1). It shews that the Israelites were still eastward of Moab in the district of the upper reaches of the river and its tributaries, all of which might loosely be called the Arnon (G. A. Smith, *H. G.* 558). This district, here and in *v.* 23 called 'the wilderness,' is named 'the wilderness of Kedemoth' in Dt. ii. 26.

that cometh out from *the* territory *of the Amorites*] This describes the wilderness, not the Arnon. The uncultivated region of the upper Arnon stretched away eastward from the Amorite country.

Arnon is the border of Moab] i.e. the northern border. At an earlier time the Moabites had possessed some land north of the river, and the Ammonites had lived north of them as far as the Jabbok. But shortly before the arrival of the Israelites, the Amorites had driven the Ammonites eastward into the desert, and the Moabites to the south of the Arnon (*v.* 26, Jud. xi. 22). Thus directly the Israelites crossed the Arnon they were on the eastern border of the Amorites' country, and, with a view to striking westward to the Jordan, they asked Sihon's permission to pass through his country. In Dt. ii. 26—37 this and the subsequent fight with the Amorites are related correctly at this point. But in Num. the journey through the Amorite land is related (*vv.* 16—20) before the hostility of Sihon is described.

14, 15. The writer here inserts a fragment of poetry from an ancient collection of songs, the last clause of which supports the above statement that Arnon was the border of Moab.

14. *the book of the Wars of* Jehovah] It may be gathered from the title that the songs celebrated the battles which Jehovah 'the God of hosts' had helped His people to win against His enemies. A similar collection of songs (which were probably handed down orally and not committed to writing till a later time) was called 'the book of the *Yāshār* ('Upright'),' Jos. x. 13, 2 S. i. 18; and Gray compares it with the *Ḥamasa* and similar collections of the Arabs.

JE Vaheb [1]in Suphah,
And the valleys of Arnon,
And the slope of the valleys 15
That inclineth toward the dwelling of Ar,
And leaneth upon the border of Moab.
And from thence *they journeyed* to [2]Beer: that is the well 16
whereof the LORD said unto Moses, Gather the people
together, and I will give them water.

[1] Or, *in storm* [2] That is, *A well*

Vaheb in Suphah] The former apparently a town, and the latter a district; both are unknown; but the latter is possibly the same as Suph (Dt. i. 1). In the original song *Vaheb* (as the Heb. shews) must have been governed by a verb, perhaps relating that Israel captured the town. But the writer here begins his quotation in the middle of the sentence, since the point of it for him lay only in the closing words. The rendering of Suphah as a substantive 'storm' (R.V. marg.) is improbable. The A.V. follows the Vulg., which, in turn, is dependent upon the Targum.

the valleys of Arnon] 'Valley,' Heb. *naḥal*, is a torrent-ravine or *wady*; see on *v.* 12. The expression stands for all the streams which unite to form the Arnon. Some of these have been mentioned in *vv.* 12, 13. Others are the Wady Babr'a, W. es-Sulṭān, W. Butmeh, W. Themed. 'The whole plateau up to the desert is thus not only cut across, but up and down, by deep ravines, and a very difficult frontier is formed' (G. A. Smith, *H. G.* 558).

15. *the slope*] Probably something steeper, such as a cliff, is intended. The sing. is not found elsewhere; the plural always in the expression 'the slopes of the Pisgah' (Dt. iii. 17, iv. 49, Jos. xii. 3, xiii. 20) except in Jos. x. 40.

the dwelling of Ar] A poetical expression for the *site* of Ar, the city being personified. *'Ar* means 'city' (LXX. Ἄρ represents 'Ir, the ordinary Heb. form of the word); in *v.* 28 it is 'Ar of Moab,' equivalent to the 'city of Moab' (xxii. 36); cf. Is. xv. 1. The site of Ar is unknown, but its locality is indicated in xxii. 36 (see note there).

leaneth upon] A poetical parallel to the preceding 'inclineth towards.'

16. The journey in a westerly, or north-westerly, direction is here begun.

Beer] The name means a 'well' (R.V. marg.). It is probably an abbreviation of a compound name; cf. Beer-sheba. A place called Beer-elim in Moab is mentioned in Is. xv. 8, but whether Beer is to be identified with that is not known.

17 Then sang Israel this song: *JE*
Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it:
18 The well, which the princes digged,
Which the nobles of the people delved,
[1]With the sceptre, *and* with their staves.
19 And from the wilderness *they journeyed* to Mattanah: and
from Mattanah to Nahaliel: and from Nahaliel to Bamoth:

[1] Or, *By* order of *the lawgiver*

18. ***with the*** **ruler's wand**, ***with their staves***] These do not seem to be implements suitable for digging a well. But it is suggested by Budde that there is 'an allusion to a custom by which when a well had been discovered it was lightly covered over, and then, on a subsequent occasion, solemnly opened with a symbolic action of the sceptre-like staves of the Sheikhs'; see Gray, *Numb.* p. 289, where parallels are cited for the practice of singing to a well. R.V. marg. 'by *order of* the lawgiver' retains the improbable interpretation of the A.V.

The historical setting in which the song has been placed obscures its real nature. Popular snatches of song were sung during the intervals of labour in the field, or in honour of the vine at the vintage, or in honour of a well or spring at the time of drawing water. The present stanza appears to be of the latter class. Wells were highly prized; and the songs would, as it were, persuade them to yield up their precious contents.

And from the wilderness [they journeyed to] *Mattanah*] The clause is doubtful, for (1) they had already left the wilderness (of *v.* 13) when they moved to Beer, and (2) the Lucianic recension of the LXX. omits 'and from Mattanah' in *v.* 19. Mattanah, if it was the name of a place, is unknown; but the word means 'a gift,' and Budde ingeniously suggests that the clause forms the last line of the song—'from the wilderness a gift,' omitting the initial 'and' (1). The LXX. translators appear to have felt the difficulty of 'from the wilderness' and to have removed it by reading 'And from *Beer* to Mattanah.'

The Targ. of Onkelos on this verse contains a legend according to which the well followed the Israelites on their journeys over hill and dale. In 1 Cor. x. 4 S. Paul refers to the legend but combines with it a reference to the rock which produced water (Num. xx. 11).

19. ***and from Mattanah to Nahaliel***] If Budde's suggestion in the preceding note is correct, the original reading here was perhaps 'and from *thence* to N.', as in *v.* 16 after the insertion of the foregoing song, or, following the hint in the LXX., 'and from Beer to N.'

Nahaliel is unknown. It means 'the wady of God.' G. A. Smith (*H. G.* 562) suggests the Wady Zerkā Ma'în with its healing springs, which flows into the Dead Sea about midway between its northern end and the mouth of the Arnon.

Bamoth] The name means 'high places.' These were numerous in the hilly country of Moab, so that the place cannot be safely identified.

JE and from Bamoth to the valley that is in the field of Moab, 20
to the top of Pisgah, which looketh down upon [1]the desert.

And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the 21
Amorites, saying, Let me pass through thy land: we will 22
not turn aside into field, or into vineyard; we will not drink

[1] Or, *Jeshimon*

It is probably an abbreviation of a compound name, and may be the same as Bamoth-Baal (xxii. 41 marg., Jos. xiii. 17). 'Beth-Bamoth' (perhaps the same place) occurs in Mesha's inscription, known as the Moabite stone. (See Hastings' *DB.* iii. 407.) Bamoth was probably a high place not far south of the 'valley' of *v.* 20.

20. *the valley that is in the* **region** *of Moab*, [om. *to*] *the top of* **the** *Pisgah*] The two expressions are placed somewhat awkwardly in apposition; but they appear to mean: the valley which is in that part of the region of Moab known as the top of the Pisgah.

the valley] was a glen (*gay'*, distinct from *naḥal*, *v.* 14) which cut through the hills and emerged at the Jordan, perhaps the present *Wâdy 'Ayûn Mûsa* ('Moses' springs') which runs into the Jordan valley some four or five miles north of the northern end of the Dead Sea, the torrent then flowing with a south-westerly curve into the Sea.

the **region** *of Moab*] denotes the region which properly belonged to Moab, but of which the Amorites were in possession at the moment.

the top of **the** *Pisgah*] 'The Pisgah' seems to have been the name applied to the broken edge of the Moabite plateau where it falls steeply to the Dead Sea and the Jordan valley; and 'the top, or head, of the Pisgah' (xxiii. 14, Dt. iii. 27, xxxiv. 1) is a collective term for the projections or promontories slightly lower than the main plateau and standing out from the western slopes. The word is derived from a root which in Aram. and late Heb. signifies 'to cleave'; and it may describe the appearance of the range as seen from the west, standing out in a series of separate peaks.

which looketh down upon the **Jeshimon**] The name, which denotes 'arid or desert land,' is used of the deserts through which Israel passed in their journey from Egypt (Dt. xxxii. 10, Ps. lxviii. 7 &c.), and of the waste land on the east of Judah, north of the Dead Sea (1 S. xxiii. 19, 24, xxvi. 1, 3 marg.). But here the verb 'looketh down,' which is chiefly used of men looking down from a window (Gen. xxvi. 8, 2 S. xxiv. 20, Cant. vi. 10), or of God looking down out of heaven (Ps. cii. 19), seems to point to a district more immediately below the Pisgah, which must be the barren tract north of the Dead Sea and *east* of the Jordan (see G. A. Smith, *H. G.* 564 note).

21—35. *The victories over Sihon and Og.* See the parallel account in Dt. ii. 24—iii. 13. The previous verses have described the Israelites' march through the territory occupied by the Amorites on the north of

of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's *high* way, *JE*
23 until we have passed thy border. And Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel into the wilderness, and came to Jahaz: and he fought against Israel.
24 And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon: for the border of the children of
25 Ammon was strong. And Israel took all these cities: and

the Arnon, and their arrival at one of the glens which cleave the western edge of the plateau, close to the spot where it ran into the Jordan valley. The narrative now returns to the earlier point, described in *v.* 13, when they were still on the eastern border of the Amorites.

Since the town of Heshbon commanded the glens, it would have been impossible to penetrate into them unless the town had first been captured; but the writer has arranged his material in the present order for the sake of convenience. The battles with Sihon and Og being the last struggles before the promised land could be reached, the remembrance of them was cherished; see Jud. xi. 19—22, 1 K. iv. 19, Neh. ix. 22, Pss. cxxxv. 11, cxxxvi. 19 f.

21—25. Sihon, refusing passage through his territory, was conquered, and his towns were occupied.

22. *the* **king's way**] See on **xx.** 17.

until we have passed **through** *thy* **territory**] And similarly in the next verse.

23. *the wilderness*] See on *v.* 13.

Jahaz] Dt. ii. 32, Is. xv. 4, Jer. xlviii. 34. The form Jahzah is used in Jos. xiii. 18, xxi. 36, Jud. xi. 20 (Heb.), Jer. xlviii. 21, 1 Ch. vi. 78. The site is unknown, but it evidently lay on the eastern boundary of Sihon's territory, since he came thither to prevent Israel from crossing it. In agreement with this it is twice mentioned with Kedemoth (Jos. xiii. 18, xxi. 36 f.), which is the name of 'the wilderness' in Dt. ii. 26, and twice seems to be named as a limit of Moab, at some distance from Heshbon (Is. xv. 4, Jer. xlviii. 34).

24. *from Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon*] This gives three boundaries of Sihon's kingdom, the Jordan being the western boundary. Arnon was on the south (*v.* 13), Jabbok on the north, and the Ammonites on the east, whither the Amorites had driven them. The Jabbok flows into the Jordan nearly 25 miles north of the Dead Sea. The district here described is now known as the *Belka'* (see G. A. Smith, *H. G.* 535 f.).

for the border of the children of Ammon was strong] This may be intended to explain why Sihon's territory extended no further on the east, or why the Israelites did not push their conquests further. The natural features of the country would afford no special obstacle, but the border

JE Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all the [1]towns thereof. For Heshbon was the city 26
of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab, and taken all his land out of his

[1] Heb. *daughters*

fortresses might be impregnable. The Heb. adjective, however, is peculiar; *'az* (עָז) usually denotes 'fierce,' 'cruel,' rather than strong. The LXX. read the word as 'Jazer,' a town mentioned in *v.* 32, xxxii. 3, 35; and it is possible that 'for strong (כִּי עָז) was the border, &c.' should be emended to 'at Jazer (בִּיעֶזֶר) was the border, &c.' a statement which finds a parallel in Jos. xiii. 25. The words may have been a comment by the writer or a compiler on the preceding clause.

25. *all the cities*] No Amorite cities have as yet been mentioned. It is probable that a portion of the narrative, which must have contained a list of captured cities, has been lost.

the Amorites] The name *Amurrâ* occurs in Babylonian and Assyrian texts and in the Tell-el-Amarna tablets for the inhabitants of Syria and Palestine in general, before the time of the Exodus. But the natives whom the Israelites found in and around Palestine on their arrival were by no means homogeneous, and various names, such as Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites and others, frequently appear. The name 'Amorite' is sometimes used for the native inhabitants generally: see Gen. xv. 16, xlviii. 22, Jos. xxiv. 15, Am. ii. 9, 1 K. xxi. 26, 2 K. xxi. 11. But sometimes it denotes natives in particular localities; e.g. in Canaan west of the Jordan (Jos. v. 1, vii. 7); in the district afterwards occupied by Judah (Jos. x. 5 f. 12, Jud. i. 34—36); in the Negeb and to the south and east of the Dead Sea (Gen. xiv. 7, Dt. i. 7, 44). Most frequently, however, it denotes the inhabitants of the district east of the Jordan, under the rule of Sihon and Og. Whether they were the original inhabitants who had been driven out by Moab and Ammon, but had regained their footing under the leadership of these two kings, or whether they had only first gained their territory by driving out Moab and Ammon, we do not know.

Heshbon] The modern *Hesbân*, standing some 2940 feet above the sea, about 18 miles from the Jordan, opposite to Jericho.

all the towns thereof] R.V. marg. 'daughters' is the literal meaning of the Heb. The word denotes the small towns and villages near, and dependent upon, Heshbon; cf. *v.* 32, xxxii. 42, Jud. i. 27.

26—30. The writer explains that Heshbon used to belong to the Moabites, but that Sihon had taken it from them. He quotes an ancient poem with which he was acquainted, having heard it from the lips of 'those that speak in proverbs' (see on *v.* 27).

The interpretation of the song is somewhat doubtful, and *v.* 30 is corrupt and almost untranslateable. The word 'wherefore' (*v.* 27) suggests that the poem is quoted in order to explain *v.* 26; the writer, as in *v.* 14, illustrates by an ancient song a statement which he has just made.

27 hand, even unto Arnon. Wherefore they that speak in *JE*
proverbs say,
Come ye to Heshbon,
Let the city of Sihon be built and established:
28 For a fire is gone out of Heshbon,
A flame from the city of Sihon:
It hath devoured Ar of Moab,
The lords of [1]the high places of Arnon.
29 Woe to thee, Moab!
Thou art undone, O people of Chemosh:
He hath given his sons as fugitives,
And his daughters into captivity,

[1] Or, *Bamoth*,

This statement is that Moab had been previously conquered by the Amorites; and the song is *a taunt to the Amorites whose capital Israel has destroyed.* The taunt is, in effect, 'Why do you not come and rebuild your fallen capital, for you shewed prowess enough in the past when you conquered Moab!' All the verbs in *vv.* 28 f. must therefore be rendered as aorists—'a fire *went* out,' 'it *devoured*,' 'thou *wast undone*,' 'he *gave*.' Another interpretation of the song will be mentioned after the notes on *v.* 30; but the above is much the more probable.

27. *they that speak in proverbs say*] *they that* **recite ballads** *say*. The Heb. *māshāl* was 'any suggestive saying that implied more than it actually said.' This might be a 'proverb,' i.e. a sententious or pithy remark containing a proposition which was widely applicable in human life, or a didactic or authoritative utterance, as those of Balaam (chs. xxiii. f.), or a short song or ode with some special characteristic either in its contents or in its artistic construction, such as a dirge, a taunt-song over a fallen foe, or more generally a ballad. The present song is a ballad, which, if the above interpretation is correct, contains a taunt.

The tense of the verb 'say' has a frequentative force, implying that the poem was frequently recited by the ballad-singers, and that the writer knew it not from any book but by hearing it from their lips.

Let the city of Sihon] Poetical parallelism; Heshbon is the city of Sihon.

28. *For a fire* **went** *out* **from** *Heshbon...it* **devoured** &c.] The Amorites in the past gained possession of Heshbon, and from thence sent forth destruction upon the other towns of Moab. See Jer. xlviii. 45 f. where the passage is quoted.

29. The verse is still ironical; the Israelites express their pity for Moab in her destruction by the Amorites.

He hath given] *He* **gave**. Chemosh, the god of the Moabites, delivered his people into the hands of their enemies. Cf. Jer. xlviii. 13.

JE Unto Sihon king of the Amorites.
We have shot at them; Heshbon is perished even 30
unto Dibon,
And we have laid waste even unto Nophah,
[1]Which *reacheth* unto Medeba.

[1] Some ancient authorities have, *Fire* reached *unto*

Unto Sihon king of the Amorites] *Unto* an Amorite king *Sihon.* The clause may be a late gloss; the expression is unusual, and the quotation in Jer. xlviii. 46 ends at the word 'captivity.'

30. **And** *we* **shot** *at them*] So the Heb. text. An extremely doubtful clause, which represents a single word in the Heb. (וְנִירֵם). If it is correct, the taunt has now ceased, and the words are those of the Israelites who triumph over the Amorites. But the sudden introduction of the first person is strange, the form of the Heb. verb is unusual, and the rhythmical division of the line is disturbed.

Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon] A very awkward expression, if it means that the people of all the towns from Heshbon to Dibon perished. Both these clauses require emendation. LXX. has καὶ τὸ σπέρμα αὐτῶν ἀπολεῖται, Ἐσεβὼν ἕως Δαιβών, which may preserve the true reading, '**and their posterity** (וְנִינָם) *perished* (**from**) *Heshbon to Dibon.*'

And we have laid waste...Medeba] This latter half of the verse is even more corrupt, and no very satisfactory solution has been proposed. A variety of emendations is possible, as may be seen in Dillmann's note on the passage[1]. Nothing more can be said with certainty than that the verse describes the destruction of Moabite towns.

Dibon] The modern *Dhibân*, which lies in the south of what was the Amorite district, half-an-hour's walk N.W. of Aroer, and 1½ hours from the Arnon (Baedeker's *Palestine*).

Nophah] is unknown, and the name is probably only the result of the corruption of the text. G. A. Smith and others suggest Nobaḥ, which is mentioned with Jogbehah in Jud. viii. 11; this lay to the east of Moab near the desert.

Medeba] spelt Mehedeba in Mesha's inscription. It is the modern *Mâdebâ*, two hours to the south of Heshbon.

Another explanation of the song, adopted by several writers, is that it celebrates a conquest of Moab by *Israel*. The verbs in *vv.* 28 f. can, in this case, be rendered as perfects, as in R.V. But nothing has been said of any conquest of the Moabites by Israel; indeed in the tradition preserved in Dt. ii. 9 the Israelites were forbidden to attack Moab. Hence the supporters of this interpretation understand the song to refer to a later victory over Moab, e.g. that in the 9th century which reduced

[1] Pesh. reads the last three words as אֲשֶׁר עַל מִדְבָּר 'which is on the desert.' This is adopted by G. A. Smith (*H.G.* 560). The LXX. translators found the passage hopeless.

31 Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites. And Moses *JE*
32 sent to spy out Jazer, and they took the towns thereof, and
33 drove out the Amorites that were there. | And they turned *D*
and went up by the way of Bashan: and Og the king of
Bashan went out against them, he and all his people, to

Moab to pay tribute to Israel (see 2 K. iii. 4 f., and Mesha's inscription), and suppose that the compiler inserted it at this point with no regard to the context. But even if that were possible it would leave 'wherefore' (*v.* 27) unexplained. If the words 'unto an Amorite king Sihon' (*v.* 29) are genuine, they definitely exclude this interpretation; but see note above. Cf. also G. A. Smith, *H.G.* 560 f. and Appendix III.

32. The capture of Jazer stands in a curiously isolated position, after the general statement in *v.* 31. It is probably taken from another source which described the capture of several individual towns. It is not mentioned either in Dt. ii. or Jud. xi.

Jazer] The site is unknown, and more than one suggestion has been made for its identification. Is. xvi. 8 suggests that it was some distance from Heshbon. It appears to have lain to the east, near the Ammonite border (Num. xxxii. 35, Jos. xiii. 25).

33—35 (D). *The defeat of Og the king of Bashan.*

This defeat is mentioned in the following passages of the Hexateuch: xxxii. 33, Dt. i. 4, iii. 1—13, iv. 47, xxix. 7; Jos. ix. 10, xii. 4, xiii. 30. Of these the first and last are assigned to P, and all the others are Deuteronomic. If the present passage is compared with Dt. iii. 1—3 it will be seen that it agrees almost *verbatim* with the latter, except for the substitution of the third person for the first. In the Pesh. version there are several insertions in Numbers of passages from Deut., and this is probably an earlier instance in the Heb. text. It is to be noticed also that there is no reference to Og in xxii. 2. The account of the conquest of Bashan, therefore, is not preserved in any tradition earlier than Deut., and many writers on that account doubt if it is historical. The question cannot be decided with certainty; but there is nothing in the nature of the case to render such a conquest improbable. Bashan was a fertile and attractive district; and there is no evidence that Israel stayed east of the Jordan such a short time as to make an advance to the north improbable. See G. A. Smith, *H.G.* 575 f. and Appendix III.

33. *by the way* **to the** *Bashan*] The name, which usually has the article, seems to signify 'soft and fertile ground.' The Bashan was 'the broad and fertile tract of country on the E. of Jordan, bounded (somewhat roughly) on the S. by the Yarmūk and a line passing through Edre'i and Salecah (mentioned as border cities in Dt. iii. 10), on the E. by the imposing range of extinct volcanoes called the Jebel Haurān, on the W. by Geshur and Ma'acah (see Josh. xii. 5), and on the N. stretching out towards Hermon (cf. Dt. xxxiii. 22)' (Driver, *Enc. Bibl.* 495). It was noted for its rich pastures, its well-fed herds of cattle and its oak forests.

D battle at Edrei. And the LORD said unto Moses, Fear him 34
not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his
people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou
didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at
Heshbon. So they smote him, and his sons, and all his 35
people, until there was none left him remaining: and they
P possessed his land. | And the children of Israel journeyed, 22
and pitched in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan at
Jericho.

34. *Edrei*] the modern *Edre'āt* or *Der'āt*, appears to have been the second royal city of Bashan; cf. Dt. i. 4, Jos. xii. 4, xiii. 12. It lay on the southern border of Bashan (Dt. iii. 1, 10), about 30 miles east of the Sea of Tiberias, and 30 miles west of the Ḥaurān range.

35. *and his sons*] These words are absent from Dt. iii. 3; but cf. ii. 33.

xxii. 1. The verse appears to be the continuation of P's itinerary in xxi. 10, 11; cf. xxxiii. 48.

the steppes *of Moab*] A term, peculiar to P, which denotes the open plain, immediately to the north of the Dead Sea, about 9 miles from north to south and from 5 to 7 miles broad. The similar plain on the west of Jordan is named 'the steppes of Jericho' (Jos. iv. 13, v. 10).

on the other side of *the Jordan*] i.e. on the east. The expression is from the point of view of a writer in Palestine.

the Jordan at Jericho] lit. 'the Jordan *of* Jericho,' i.e. that portion of the river which flows by the town. Cf. 'the waters of Megiddo' (Jud. v. 19).

xxii. 2—xxiv. *The story of Balaam* (JE).

The narratives of J and E are, to a large extent, so closely interwoven that it is difficult to separate them. But in certain portions the differences between them stand out clearly, and will be indicated in the notes.

An approximate analysis is as follows:—

E. *vv.* 2, 3^a, 5^a (to 'River'), 8—10, 12—16, 19—21, 35—41.

J. *vv.* 3^b, 4, 5^b—7, 11, 17, 18, 22—34.

The object of this well-known narrative is to illustrate the all-important thought 'if God be for us who can be against us?' Jehovah holds Israel under His protection, and therefore provides that they shall receive a blessing and not a curse. Pharaoh's obstinacy in opposing Jehovah in Egypt is paralleled, at the end of the journeyings, by the obstinacy of Balak, and the result is that the divine curse falls upon Moab (xxiv. 17) among other foes of Israel. A further interest in the story is the character of Balaam, which, however, has sometimes been allowed such undue prominence as to throw into the shade the real religious import of the narrative. His character has been very variously estimated according as one or another feature in the narrative is

2 And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done *E*
3 to the Amorites. And Moab was sore afraid of the people,
because they were many: | and Moab [1] was distressed because *J*
4 of the children of Israel. And Moab said unto the elders of
Midian, Now shall [2] this multitude lick up all that is round

[1] Or, *abhorred* [2] Heb. *the assembly*

emphasized; see e.g. Stanley, *Jewish Church*, and Lock in *J. Th. S.* ii. 161—3. This variety of estimate results from the fact that the narrative is not homogeneous. In E, so far as it has been preserved, no blame attaches to his character. It is true that in J (*vv.* 5[b]—7, 11, 17, 18) Balak expects him to do the work of a prophet for money, but this did not necessarily imply avarice; it was a not uncommon feature of early Israelite life; Samuel (1 S. ix. 8), Ahijah (1 K. xiv. 3), Elisha (2 K. viii. 8 f.) and Amos (Am. vii. 12) were expected to do the same[1]. And when it came to the point, Balaam declared that no amount of gold or silver would persuade him to oppose the will of Jehovah his God by cursing Israel. The idea that he was forced to utter blessings mechanically though he wanted to curse is quite absent from the story, and ought not to be read into it. In J we only learn that Jehovah was angry with him because he went (see on xxii. 22), no reason being assigned, or perhaps rather the reason assigned having dropped out of the narrative when it was combined with E. In D (Dt. xxiii. 4 f., Jos. xxiv. 9 f.) we meet for the first time with the thought that Balaam *wanted* to curse for hire, but was prevented by God, cf. Neh. xiii. 2. Lastly in P (Num. xxxi. 16) a different, and terrible, sin is related of him. He persuaded the Israelites to commit sin with the Midianite women at Peor, and thus brought calamity upon God's people after all (Num. xxxi. 16). The dark estimate of his character is adopted in the N.T.: avarice (Jude 11, 2 Pet. ii. 15, 16), and the teaching of idolatry and fornication (Rev. ii. 14).

2—19. Balak king of Moab being frightened by the near proximity of the Israelites sent for Balaam a famous soothsayer to curse them, offering him liberal payment. Balaam came but refused to utter any oracle but that which Jehovah revealed to him.

Zippor] The word denotes 'a little bird,' the fem. of which is seen in Zippōrah, Moses' wife. The name may point to early totemistic beliefs (see Frazer, *Totemism*[2], W. R. Smith, *Rel. Sem.*[2] 124 ff.).

the Amorites] Og, the king of Bashan, is not mentioned; see on xxi. 33—35.

3. The two halves of the verse appear to be doublets, from E and J respectively.

4. *And Moab said*] The people are represented in the person of their king.

the elders of Midian] They are mentioned, in this story, only here

[1] Amos' reply to Amaziah (Am. vii. 14) shews that the great prophets of Israel rose superior to the practice of the earlier 'sons of the prophets'; he had never been one who would 'eat bread' by prophesying. And from that time onwards it is probable that prophesying for payment was condemned by the better minds in the nation.

J about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time. |
E And he sent messengers unto Balaam the son of Beor, to 5
J Pethor, which is by the River, | to the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the [1]face of the earth, and they abide over against me: come now therefore, 6 I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I know

[1] Heb. *eye*

and in *v.* 7. The Midianites may be supposed to have made common cause with the Moabites in fear of the formidable enemy. But if so, it is surprising that they are not named in Balaam's utterances in ch. xxiv. Behind the present narrative there may lie some unknown tradition in J which formed the basis of P's narrative in xxxi. 16[1]. Or perhaps, as some think, a late compiler has here introduced the Midianites in view of xxxi. 16.

And Balak...at that time] In *v.* 2 E has already mentioned Balak as a well-known person.

5. *Balaam the son of Beor*] It is interesting that the name Bela the son of Beor occurs of a king of *Edom* (Gen. xxxvi. 32). Balaam (Heb. *Bil'ām*) and Bela' are practically identical words; and some have thought that the two men are the same, and that different conceptions of them were handed down in the Israelite and Edomite traditions. But there is no other evidence for the conjecture (see art. 'Bela' in *Enc. Bibl.*).

Pethor, which is by the River] i.e. by the Euphrates. Cf. Dt. xxiii. 4 'Pethor of Aram-naharaim (Mesopotamia).' It is probably to be identified with Pitru (mentioned in an Assyr. and an Egypt. inscription), which was situated a few miles from the Euphrates, a little to the south of Carchemish. This sentence, which is probably from E, represents Balaam as living some 400 miles from Moab.

the land of the children of his people] This must mean 'his native land'; but it is a very awkward periphrasis. The Sam., Syr., Lucianic LXX., Vulg. and some Heb. MSS. read **'Ammon**, for *'ammō* 'his people.' If this is correct, J and E contained different traditions as to the country from which Balaam came. This reading is supported by the narrative of J (*vv.* 22—34) which relates that Balaam rode upon an ass, with two servants, suggesting a short journey through cultivated country rather than a long desert journey for which camels and a tent caravan would be required.

[1] Notice that Midian is geographically connected with the territory of Moab in Gen. xxxvi. 35 (J).

that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou *J*
7 cursest is cursed. And the elders of Moab and the elders
of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their
hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the
8 words of Balak. | And he said unto them, Lodge here this *E*
night, and I will bring you word again, as the LORD shall
speak unto me: and the princes of Moab abode with
9 Balaam. And God came unto Balaam, and said, What
10 men are these with thee? And Balaam said unto God,
Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, |
11 *saying*, Behold, the people that is come out of Egypt, it *J*
covereth the face of the earth: now, come curse me them;
peradventure I shall be able to fight against them, and shall
12 drive them out. | And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt *E*
not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they
13 are blessed. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said
unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land: for the
14 LORD refuseth to give me leave to go with you. And the
princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak, and
15 said, Balaam refuseth to come with us. And Balak sent yet
16 again princes, more, and more honourable than they. And
they came to Balaam, and said to him, Thus saith Balak the
son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from
17 coming unto me: | for I will promote thee unto very great *J*
honour, and whatsoever thou sayest unto me I will do:

8. *the princes of Moab*] The verse appears to be from E. In *v.* 7 J describes them as the '*elders* of Moab.'

10. *hath sent unto me, saying*] The word 'saying' is absent from the Heb. The abruptness with which the words of Balak's message are given is perhaps due to the fusion of J and E.

12. *for they are blessed*] It was necessary to inform Balaam of this; as a foreigner in far Mesopotamia he knew nothing of Israel and their relation to Jehovah.

13. Balaam may have felt regret at being unable to win the offered rewards, but there is no hint of it in the narrative. He could not know that Balak would send again.

15. Balak treats the prophet's reason for not coming as a mere excuse. Balaam, being a famous diviner, required, as he thought, to be treated with greater respect.

17. *I will promote thee unto very great honour*] *I will* **surely honour thee exceedingly**. The expression does not imply that Balaam would

J come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people. And 18
Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If
Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold,
I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do
E less or more. | Now therefore, I pray you, tarry ye also here 19
this night, that I may know what the LORD will speak unto
me more. And God came unto Balaam at night, and said 20
unto him, If the men be come to call thee, rise up, go with
them; but only the word which I speak unto thee, that shalt
thou do. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled 21
J his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. | And God's 22

be appointed to a high office, but only that the king would shew him great respect and reward him liberally.

18. Jehovah *my God*] It is very remarkable that the early Israelite tradition, as preserved in J, should have placed this expression in the mouth of an Ammonite (*v.* 7) soothsayer.

to do less or more] *to do* **small** *or* **great.** An idiomatic expression for 'to do anything at all.' The same is expressed in xxiv. 13 by 'good or bad.'

19. Balaam had learnt (*v.* 12) that Israel was a people on whom God's blessing rested. It was therefore impossible for him to go and curse them. But when Balak's more splendid retinue of princes travelled all the way to Mesopotamia to beg him again to come, he asked God again whether he might go, not to curse but to deliver a divine message whatever it might prove to be. And on his arrival he immediately told Balak that this was the purpose for which he had come (*v.* 38).

20. *If the men be come to call thee*] i.e. since the men have come this long distance to summon thee. The A.V. 'if the men come to call thee' has sometimes given rise to the erroneous idea that God gave Balaam permission to go only if the messengers came to him in the morning and again asked him to accompany them, and that Balaam, in his eager desire to go, did not wait for this.

22—34. Jehovah was angry with Balaam for going, and His 'Angel' hindered him on the way.

22. After God has expressly given permission for Balaam to go, His anger would be surprising, and would seem to imply a capricious change of mind, were it not for the consideration that the narrative is derived from two different sources. In *vv.* 22—34 Balaam travels on an ass, accompanied not by the great retinue of Moabite princes but simply by two of his own servants. The verses are from J, who relates that Balaam lived in the Ammonite country, some 40 miles distant, and the journey was made through cultivated land with vineyards and walls. See note on *v.* 5.

anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the J
LORD placed himself in the way for an adversary against
him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants
23 were with him. And the ass saw the angel of the LORD
standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand: and
the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field:
24 and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way. Then
the angel of the LORD stood in a hollow way between the
vineyards, a fence being on this side, and a fence on that
25 side. And the ass saw the angel of the LORD, and she
thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot
26 against the wall: and he smote her again. And the angel
of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place,
where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to
27 the left. And the ass saw the angel of the LORD, and she
lay down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled,
28 and he smote the ass with his staff. And the LORD opened

an adversary] Heb. 'a *satan*.' In early days a catastrophe or trouble, no less than a favour or blessing, was understood to be due to the action of God; so that here Jehovah Himself, in the form of His angel, was Balaam's adversary. That is to say, the divine action was personified. The result of this personification is that the Angel, for the most part, appears to be distinguished from Jehovah Himself. But see *v.* 35, where the Angel utters Jehovah's own words. In later times such personifications became more definitely distinguished from God Himself, so that troubles and temptations were attributed to a malevolent spirit, who was hostile to God and men, and for whom 'Satan' became a recognised title. Cf. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 with 1 Chr. xxi. 1; and see G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, pp. 410—19.

23. *with his sword drawn in his hand*] *v.* 31. Jos. v. 13.

and went into the field] The road would run through the open country ('the field'), without walls or fences. These would only be employed between vineyards, to keep out animals.

24. The 'Angel' retreated and stopped the ass in an enclosed spot between two walls or, perhaps, fences, where it could not turn aside into open country. But by pressing close to the wall the ass is pictured as contriving to pass the Angel. He therefore retreated once more, and stood in a narrow place where there was no possibility of avoiding Him. The naïve anthropomorphic conception of Jehovah involved in this narrative belongs to a very early age of folklore.

28. The miracle here recorded finds no parallel in the O.T. except that of the serpent who spoke to Eve (Gen. iii. 1, 4 f.). But similar

J the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have
I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three
times? And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast 29
mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for
now I had killed thee. And the ass said unto Balaam, Am 30
not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden all thy life long
unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And
he said, Nay. Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, 31
and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, with
his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed his head, and
fell on his face. And the angel of the LORD said unto him, 32
Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times?
behold, I am come forth for an adversary, because thy way
is [1]perverse before me: and the ass saw me, and turned 33
aside before me these three times: unless she had turned
aside from me, surely now I had even slain thee, and saved
her alive. And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I 34
have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way
against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me
E back again. | And the angel of the LORD said unto Balaam, 35

[1] Heb. *headlong*

instances are to be found in the folklore of many nations (see Gray, p. 334). The speaking ass is to be considered not as a fable—in the sense in which the word is applied, for example, to Aesop's Fables—but as a detail of a fabulous nature which attached itself, during the course of Israel's early traditions, to a narrative which may have had a historical basis. With the modern knowledge, to which God has led us, of the gradual nature of His self-revelation to Israel, and of the many different stages of literary development which are represented in the O.T., we are not under the necessity either of believing that the ass actually spoke, or of explaining away the miracle in some rationalising manner, e.g. by supposing that Balaam had a vision. The permanent spiritual value of the story lies in its representation of the strivings of conscience.

29. *thou hast mocked me*] *thou hast* **made sport of** *me*; i.e. purposely caused me annoyance for your own pleasure.

30. The ass is not represented as uttering any deep teaching or giving him a message from God. She merely defends herself against the charge of making sport of him; had he ever known her do such a thing during all the years he had owned her?

32. *thy* [lit. *the*] *way is* **headlong**] The word, however, is doubtful. Perhaps we should read יָרַטְתָּ for יָרַט, 'thou hast precipitated [undertaken precipitately] the journey.'

Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto *E*
thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes
36 of Balak. And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he
went out to meet him unto the City of Moab, which is on
the border of Arnon, which is in the utmost part of the
37 border. And Balak said unto Balaam, Did I not earnestly
send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto
38 me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour? And
Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I
now any power at all to speak any thing? the word that God
39 putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak. And Balaam went
40 with Balak, and they came unto Kiriath-huzoth. And Balak
sacrificed oxen and sheep, and sent to Balaam, and to the
41 princes that were with him. And it came to pass in the
morning, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into
[1]the high places of Baal, and he saw from thence the utmost

[1] Or, *Bamoth-baal*

35—41. At this point the narrative of E, interrupted after *v.* 21, is resumed. Balak went to the border of his territory to meet Balaam. A sacrificial feast was held, and on the next day Balaam was conducted to a point of vantage from which he could see Israel. These verses, however, are not without difficulties; and it is probable that with E have been fused those portions of J which related that Balaam was allowed to proceed to Moab, and that Balak received him on his arrival.

36. *unto the City of Moab*] *unto* **Ir** *of Moab*. The Heb. form of the name Ar of Moab (xxi. 28).

which is on the border of Arnon] i.e. the border or boundary formed by the Arnon. Moab at this time possessed no land north of the Arnon; Ir (Ar) of Moab thus lay on their northern border. The following clause defines the locality further.

which is **at the end** *of the border*] Since Balaam was coming from the east, 'the end' must be the eastern end; that is to say Ir (Ar) of Moab lay somewhere on the upper, eastern, course of the Arnon.

37. *to promote thee to honour*] *to* **honour thee**; see on *v.* 17.

39. *Kiriath-huzoth*] 'The town of streets.' The site is unknown.

40. *and sent to Balaam* &c.] When the animals had been slaughtered for sacrifice, Balak caused portions of the flesh to be brought to Balaam and the Moabite princes who had accompanied him. Cf. 1 Sam. ix. 23 f.

41. *and brought him up* **to Bamoth-Baal**] See on xxi. 19. The name indicates that it was a sanctuary.

the **end** *of the people*] Not the whole body of Israelites to their

E part of the people. And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me 23
here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and
seven rams. And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and 2
Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a
ram. And Balaam said unto Balak, Stand by thy burnt 3
offering, and I will go; peradventure the LORD will come
to meet me: and whatsoever he sheweth me I will tell thee.
And he went to a bare height. And God met Balaam: and 4
he said unto him, I have prepared the seven altars, and I
have offered up a bullock and a ram on every altar. And 5
the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return
unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak. And he returned 6
unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt offering, he, and all
the princes of Moab. And he took up his parable, and said, 7

furthest extremity but only the nearest end or fringe in the valley immediately below him, the bulk of them being hidden by the hills.

It seems clear that Bamoth-Baal was north and not south of the Arnon, otherwise the Israelites would be many miles away. But the country north of the Arnon was then in possession not of the Moabites but of the Amorites. If we knew more of the facts the difficulty might be explained; but it is not impossible that the narrative is to be considered in the light of a popular tradition which was poetical, and that the details must not be rigidly pressed.

xxiii. 1—26 (E). *Balaam's two prophetic messages.*

1—6. Balaam demanded a seven-fold sacrifice, in order to propitiate God, that He might be willing to give His prophet a message. Balak complied with the request, hoping that the message might be a curse.

3. Balaam went some distance away, in the hope that Jehovah would meet him. It is not necessary to suppose that he went to practise enchantments like a soothsayer, e.g. to watch the clouds or the flight of birds. Jehovah had already spoken to him when he was in his own home, and he might expect Him to do so again. In the following verse, indeed, Balaam claims that in the seven-fold sacrifice he has already taken the necessary means to obtain a message.

he went to a bare height] It is not clear why he should choose a *bare* height. The word is perhaps corrupt. A.V. 'a high place,' and marg. 'solitary' are wrong.

7—10. *Balaam's first prophetic message.* This consists of seven short couplets. Balaam declares the uselessness of Balak's action in fetching him for the purpose of cursing (*vv.* 7 f.); the security of Israel, their separateness from other nations, and their great numbers (*vv.* 9, 10^a); and he prays that his end may be like theirs (*v.* 10^b).

7. *he took up his parable*] i.e. he took up upon his lips, he uttered;

From Aram hath Balak brought me, *E*
The king of Moab from the mountains of the East:
Come, curse me Jacob,
And come, [1]defy Israel.
8 How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?
And how shall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied?
9 For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I behold him:
Lo, it is a people that dwell alone,
And shall not be reckoned among the nations.
10 Who can count the dust of Jacob,
[2]Or number the fourth part of Israel?
Let [3]me die the death of the righteous,
And let my last end be like his!

[1] Heb. *be wroth against* [2] Heb. *Or, by number, the &c.*
[3] Heb. *my soul*

v. 18, xxiv. 3, 15, 20 f., 23. Cf. Job xxvii. 1, xxix. 1, Am. v. 1 and frequently. On the Heb. *māshāl* ('parable'), a didactic or artistic utterance, see xxi. 27.

Aram] i.e. Aram-naharaim. See on xxii. 5. The short form Aram (cf. Hos. xii. 12, where the meaning is the same as here) usually denotes the more westerly regions of which Damascus was the capital.

the mountains of the East] The high ranges of the Syrian desert, the country of the nomad 'children of the east' (Jer. xlix. 28, Ez. xxv. 4. 10), who wandered E. of Ammon, Moab, and Edom.

9. *And* **reckoneth not itself** *among the nations*] Israel felt themselves to be completely separate from, and superior to, other nations because they possessed Jehovah's love and protection.

10. *Or number the fourth part of Israel*] involves a necessary emendation, the Heb. text (represented in R.V. marg.) being scarcely translateable.

For 'the *fourth part*' (רֹבַע) some would read 'the *myriads*' (רִבְבֹת), or perhaps, as LXX. suggests, 'the *multitude of the people* of Israel' (רֹב עַם יי).

Let me die] lit. may my soul, or my life, die.

the death of the **upright ones**] The plural adjective refers to Israel who are ideally considered as a nation of upright men. The singular pronoun at the end of the verse refers to the nation as a single whole.

There is no reference in the final words to a future life; it is a poetical parallel to the preceding clause. Balaam prays that the close of his life may be the peaceful end enjoyed by good men.

E And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me? 11
I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast
blessed them altogether. And he answered and said, Must 12
I not take heed to speak that which the LORD putteth in my
mouth? And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with 13
me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them;
thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see
them all: and curse me them from thence. And he took 14
him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built
seven altars, and offered up a bullock and a ram on every
altar. And he said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt 15
offering, while I meet *the* LORD yonder. And the LORD 16
met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Return
unto Balak, and thus shalt thou speak. And he came to him, 17
and, lo, he stood by his burnt offering, and the princes of
Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, What hath the
LORD spoken? And he took up his parable, and said, 18

Rise up, Balak, and hear;
Hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor:

11—17. Balak was angry that Jehovah did not put a curse into Balaam's mouth, and begged him to try again on another spot. The seven-fold sacrifice was again offered.

13. *unto another place*] It was a not infrequent practice with soothsayers, if they were unable to obtain an omen according to their wishes, to try several times in hopes of better success. Balak thought that if Balaam went to a more favourable spot, Jehovah might be persuaded to change His mind!

thou shalt see but the **extremity** *of them...not see them all*] The words are difficult, because Balaam has already seen only the end of the Israelite host; see xxii. 41. If the words are genuine, they may perhaps mean that Balaam would be taken to a spot whence he would still be able to see only a small part of them, but if that failed, he could finally go to a place whence he could see them all. But many writers assign the words to an editor.

14. **to** *the field of Zophim*] The site is unknown. *Ẓōphīm* means 'watchers,' and it was evidently high ground which afforded an extensive outlook.

the top of **the** *Pisgah*] See on xxi. 20. There were probably many places in the mountains of Moab which would be useful as posts for sentinels. This one is defined as lying somewhere among the western headlands.

18—24. *Balaam's second prophetic message.* This consists of eleven, or (see on *v.* 23) more probably ten, couplets. Balaam declares that

19 God is not a man, that he should lie; *E*
Neither the son of man, that he should repent:
Hath he said, and shall he not do it?
Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?
20 Behold, I have received *commandment* to bless:
And he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it.
21 He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob,
Neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel:
The LORD his God is with him,
And the shout of a king is among them.
22 God bringeth them forth out of Egypt;
He hath as it were the [1]strength of the [2]wild-ox.
23 Surely there is no enchantment [3]with Jacob,
Neither is there any divination [3]with Israel:

[1] Or, *horns* [2] Or, *ox-antelope* Heb. *reem* [3] Or, *against*

God will never change His mind (as Balak had thought, *v.* 13), and that He had bidden him to bless and not curse (*vv.* 18b—20). Israel is without calamity, and is victorious (*v.* 21). God brings him triumphantly from Egypt, and all men must tell of His doings (*vv.* 22a, 23b). Israel is as strong as the wild ox, and as fierce as a lion (*vv.* 22b, 24).

19. *Neither* **a** *son of man*] a mere mortal, with human caprices. It is the only occurrence of the expression that is certainly earlier than Ezekiel.

20. *And* **if he blesseth, then** *I cannot reverse it*] It is not necessary to read, with LXX., 'and I will bless.'

21. *He hath not beheld...Neither hath he seen* &c.] The verbs are impersonal: 'one hath not [i.e. no one hath] beheld...' But in accordance with *v.* 9, it is better to read (with Pesh.) **'I behold not... neither do I see.'**

calamity *in Jacob*...**trouble** *in Israel*] This rendering is much more in harmony with the spirit of Balaam's utterances than R.V. 'iniquity' and 'perverseness.' See further in note on *v.* 23.

22. *He hath as it were the* **horns** *of the wild-ox*] 'He' means Israel, not God. The word for 'horns' is rare; but Dt. xxxiii. 17 helps to decide the meaning. In Ps. xcv. 4 it denotes mountain peaks. The wild-ox (*re'ēm*) 'is the *rîmu* of the Assyrian inscriptions. It is represented on the Assyrian sculptures as a huge species (now extinct) of the bovine kind.' See art. 'Unicorn' in Hastings' *DB.* iv.

23a. For divination is not in Jacob, and soothsaying is not in Israel] This appears to explain Israel's victorious strength by the fact that they were free from these heathen practices. But the words are strange in the midst of a passage describing the fierce and irresistible advance of an army with a divine King and Captain at their head. In *v.* 21 the words for 'calamity' and 'trouble' can also be rendered, as in R.V., 'iniquity' and 'perverseness.' And it is very probable that a scribe,

E [1]Now shall it be [2]said of Jacob and of Israel,
What hath God wrought!
Behold, the people riseth up as a lioness, 24
And as a lion doth he lift himself up:
He shall not lie down until he eat of the prey,
And drink the blood of the slain.
And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor 25
bless them at all. But Balaam answered and said unto Balak, 26
Told not I thee, saying, All that the LORD speaketh, that I
R must do? | And Balak said unto Balaam, Come now, I will 27
take thee unto another place; peradventure it will please
J God that thou mayest curse me them from thence. | And 28
Balak took Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh down
upon [3]the desert. And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here 29

[1] Or, *At the due season* [2] Or, *told to...what God hath wrought*
[3] Or, *Jeshimon*

who understood the two words in the latter sense, inserted the present clause as a marginal comment on *v.* 21, thus endorsing the principle contained in 1 Sam. xv. 23, that soothsaying and divination by means of teraphim are sins no less than rebellion against God's commands. It is further noteworthy that in the same chapter (1 Sam. xv. 29) are quoted Balaam's words in *v.* 19ª.

23ᵇ. *Now shall it be said* &c.] If the former half of the verse was not originally part of the poem, these words refer suitably to God's action in bringing Israel out of Egypt (*v.* 22ª).

24. Cf. Mic. v. 8.

25, 26. Balak in his anger refuses to allow Balaam to make any further utterances about Israel, either to curse or to bless. Balaam reminds him of his reiterated statement that he could only say what Jehovah commanded him (xxii. 38, xxiii. 3, 12). Balaam's relations with Balak, therefore, as recorded in E, are now at an end. The sequel (*vv.* 27—30, xxiv.) is not really a sequel, but a parallel account from J.

27. This verse is a connecting link, added by the compiler, between the E and the J narrative. The words 'I will take thee unto another place' cannot be from J, for he has not yet related that Balaam was taken to any place; but the whole of ch. xxiv. is from J.

28. *the top of* the *Peor* &c.] An expression exactly parallel to that in xxi. 20 (see note). The site of 'the Peor' is unknown, but it was evidently in the neighbourhood of the Pisgah. And Beth-peor (Dt. iii. 29, iv. 46, xxxiv. 6, Jos. xiii. 20) cannot have been far distant, since it was evidently a sanctuary where the Baal or Lord of Peor (Num. xxv. 3, 5) was worshipped. The LXX. equivalent for Peor is *Phogōr*; and Eusebius speaks of a mountain of that name opposite Jericho, and says

seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven J
30 rams. And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered up
24 a bullock and a ram on every altar. And when Balaam saw
that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he went not, as at
the other times, to meet with enchantments, but he set his
2 face toward the wilderness. And Balaam lifted up his eyes,
and he saw Israel dwelling according to their tribes; and the
3 spirit of God came upon him. And he took up his parable,
and said,

Balaam the son of Beor saith,
And the man whose eye [1]was closed saith:
4 He saith, which heareth the words of God,

[1] Or, *is opened*

that part of it was 7 miles from Heshbon. It should probably, therefore, be placed quite close to the Wady Heshbān (see art. 'Beth-Peor' in *Enc. Bibl.*).

CHAP. XXIV.

Balaam's prophetic messages (J).

xxiv. 1, 2. Balaam knew that Jehovah wished Israel to be blessed; he did not therefore seek an omen to guide him, but began his declaration at once.

1. *he went not, as at the other times, to meet with* **omens**] The Heb. has a curious idiom which may be rendered either as in R.V., or 'as at other times' (omitting 'the'), i.e. as was his usual practice on similar occasions. In either case the verse cannot be from the same writer as that of ch. xxiii., for on the one hand ch. xxiii. does not relate that Balaam sought for omens, and on the other (if the present words refer to his usual practice) the remark that he did not seek for omens would more naturally have been placed at the beginning of ch. xxiii. and not after two of his utterances.

3—9. *Balaam's first prophetic message.* In its present form this consists of nine couplets and two triplets. But the text has undergone corruption, and perhaps there were originally eleven couplets.

3, 4. The opening triplet is as follows:

The oracle of Balaam son of Beor.
The oracle of the man whose eye is (?) closed.
The oracle of one that heareth the words of God.

The form of it should be compared with 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, where the same word 'oracle' is used. The text appears to be corrupt. The word rendered 'closed' is very doubtful; and 'opened' (R.V. marg.) is no less questionable. With the former rendering the reference is to the eyes closed in a trance; with the latter, to the eyes of the mind opened to receive the vision.

J Which seeth the vision of the Almighty,
Falling down, and having his eyes open:
How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, 5
Thy tabernacles, O Israel!
As valleys are they spread forth, 6
As gardens by the river side,
As lign-aloes which the LORD hath planted,
As cedar trees beside the waters.
Water shall flow from his buckets, 7
And his seed shall be in many waters,

4. The parallelism of these opening words with those in *vv.* 15, 16 suggests that the line 'And knoweth the knowledge of the Most High' has fallen out of the present passage.

the Almighty] Heb. *Shaddai*. *v.* 16 and Gen. xlix. 25 are probably the only pre-exilic occurrences of the word. In the latter passage the divine title should probably be read 'El Shaddai, which occurs in Ex. vi. 3, Ez. x. 5 and five times in Genesis. Shaddai alone occurs, besides here and *v.* 16, thirty-eight times, of which thirty-one are in Job, and it also forms a part of two or three proper names.

Its original meaning is much disputed; 'the Almighty' has become a conventional equivalent, but is in no sense a rendering of the word. It is possible that its true spelling is Shadai. See the writer's note in *Exodus*, pp. 40 f.

Falling down, and having his eyes **uncovered**] This is generally understood to mean 'falling asleep, or into a prophetic trance (A.V.), but having the eyes of the mind open to receive God's revelation.' Balaam, however, is not represented as receiving his messages in a state of unconsciousness. But there is nothing in the narrative which actually forbids this explanation.

6. *As valleys are they spread forth*] *As* **wadies that stretch themselves out**; beautifully watered glens stretching away into the distance. Like the three following, it is a simile of luxuriant prosperity.

As lign-aloes &c.] Heb. *'ahālīm*. But this word elsewhere denotes a fragrant perfume brought from the far east (Ps. xlv. 8, Prov. vii. 17); the tree or plant which yielded it was not indigenous in Palestine or the neighbourhood. See next note.

As cedar trees beside the waters] But cedars do not grow beside water; see art. 'Cedars' in Hastings' *DB*. i. On the other hand cedars (not aloes) are spoken of as planted by Jehovah (Ps. civ. 16). It is therefore possible that the words 'which Jehovah hath planted' and 'beside the waters' have been accidentally transposed. If so, Dillmann's conjecture *'ēlīm* 'palms' for *'ahālīm* would be very suitable, since palms grow beside water (cf. Ex. xv. 27).

7. The first two lines are difficult and perhaps corrupt. Some explain them as a description of the luxuriance of Israel's future home.

And his king shall be higher than Agag, J
And his kingdom shall be exalted.
8 God bringeth him forth out of Egypt;
He hath as it were the [1]strength of the [1]wild-ox:
He shall eat up the nations his adversaries,
And shall break their bones in pieces,
And smite *them* through with his arrows.
9 He couched, he lay down as a lion,
And as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?
Blessed be every one that blesseth thee,
And cursed be every one that curseth thee.
10 And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together: and Balak said unto Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou

[1] See ch. xxiii. 22

Israel is pictured as a man carrying buckets to water his crop; and his seed, i.e. his corn, will be grown in well-watered ground. Cf. Ps. lxv. 9 f.

And **may** *his king* **be** *higher than Agag*] *v.* 20 seems to shew that in Heb. tradition the Amalekites were once a mighty nation of the first rank, though there is no historical evidence that they ever were so. Agag their king would thus be a symbol of might. If Agag is the man who was captured by Saul, the present poem must be at least as late as the monarchy. Some indeed have supposed, from the present passage, that Agag was a title applied to all Amalekite kings, like the title Pharaoh in Egypt. But the text may be corrupt. LXX. and Samar. read 'Gog,' which is found only in Ez. xxxviii. f., as a name belonging to the region north of Assyria. Cheyne suggests Og. The passage is at present an unsolved problem.

8. The first two lines are identical (with the exception of 'him' for 'them') with xxiii. 22 (E); and in both traditions the words follow a reference to Israel's king, and precede the metaphor of the lion and lioness.

And smite them *through with his arrows*] lit. 'and (as for) his arrows he shall smite.' 'His arrows' (חִצָּיו) should perhaps be either 'his oppressors' (לֹחֲצָיו) or 'his loins' (חַלְצָיו). For the latter cf. Dt. xxxiii. 11.

9. *Blessed be every one* &c.] The clauses occur inverted in Gen. xxvii. 29.

10—14. Balak, in anger, bade Balaam flee back to his land. Balaam replied, as before, that he was bound to utter the message which Jehovah gave him, and, instead of departing at once, uttered four further declarations.

I hast altogether blessed them these three times. Therefore 11
now flee thou to thy place: I thought to promote thee unto
great honour; but, lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from
honour. And Balaam said unto Balak, Spake I not also to 12
thy messengers which thou sentest unto me, saying, If Balak 13
would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go
beyond the word of the LORD, to do either good or bad of
mine own mind; what the LORD speaketh, that will I speak?
And now, behold, I go unto my people: come, *and* I will 14
advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the
latter days. And he took up his parable, and said, 15

Balaam the son of Beor saith,
And the man whose eye [1]was closed saith:
He saith, which heareth the words of God, 16
And knoweth the knowledge of the Most High,
Which seeth the vision of the Almighty,
Falling down, and having his eyes open:
I see him, but not now: 17
I behold him, but not nigh:
There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,
And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel,
And shall smite through the corners of Moab,

[1] Or, *is opened*

10. *these three times*] If the utterances in chs. xxiii. and xxiv. have been rightly assigned to E and J respectively, these words must have been added by the editor who combined the two accounts.

14. *I will advertise thee*] *I will* **counsel** *thee.* 'Advertise' is an archaism, meaning 'inform'; cf. Ruth iv. 4 (A.V.).

15—19. *Balaam's second prophetic message.* This consists of seven couplets and a triplet.

15, 16. See *vv.* 3, 4.

17. In accordance with *v.* 14 Balaam treats of the future of Israel. 'I see him (Israel), but not (as he is) now; I behold him, but not (encamped as he is) nigh.'

There shall come forth] lit. 'there hath trodden' (דָּרַךְ). Read probably יִזְרַח *there shall* **rise.**

a star] A metaphor for a glorious king; cf. Is. xiv. 12, Rev. xxii. 16. According to an early Jewish interpretation, found in the Targum, this verse was a prediction of the Messiah. The famous pretender in the reign of Hadrian was called Barcochba ('son of the star').

the corners] better 'the two sides [of the head],' the 'temples.' In

And break down all the sons [1]of tumult. *J*
18 And Edom shall be a possession,
Seir also shall be a possession, *which were* his enemies;
While Israel doeth valiantly.
19 And out of Jacob shall one have dominion,
And shall destroy the remnant from the city.
20 And he looked on Amalek, and took up his parable, and *R*
said,
Amalek was the first of the nations;

[1] Or, *of Sheth*

Jer. xlviii. 45, where the passage is quoted, the word 'corner' is in the singular, and is in parallelism with 'the crown of the head.'

And break down all the sons of tumult] In accordance with Jer. xlviii. 45 קָרְקַר ('break down') must be read קָדְקֹד ('crown of the head'); cf. Ps. vii. 16, lxviii. 21.

sons of tumult] Heb. 'sons of *shēth*.' R.V. ('tumult') adopts a necessary emendation (שְׁאֵת for שֵׁת) suggested by Jer. xlviii. 45.

The two lines will therefore run:

And shall smite the **temples** [of the head] *of Moab*,
And **the crown** [of the head] **of** *all the sons of* **tumult**[1].

18. which were *his enemies*] Heb. has simply 'his enemies,' attached very awkwardly to the preceding words. Perhaps a word has been lost, and we should read ' His enemies ——' in contrast with the next clause: **And** *Israel doeth valiantly*.

19. An obscure verse, which is perhaps a later addition to the song. It appears to look forward to a Messianic prospect of universal dominion. Some think that *vv.* 18, 19 are both entirely corrupt beyond restoration.

shall one have dominion] This and the following verb are impersonal. 'And dominion will be exercised out of Jacob, and the remnant (of Israel's enemies) will be destroyed out of the city.' If the text is right, 'out of the city' is parallel with 'out of Jacob.' It is therefore the city of the conquerors, i.e. Zion.

20. *The utterance on Amalek.*

And he **saw** *Amalek*] The country of the Amalekites and that of the Kenites (*v.* 21) might be just visible from the Moabite hills, lying far to the south and south-west.

the first of the nations] i.e. the choicest; Heb. *rē'shith*. Cf. xviii. 12. There is no historical evidence that the Amalekites ever occupied a high position among the nations (see on *v.* 7).

[1] Others would read 'sons of lifting up,' i.e. pride (שְׂאֵת).

R But his latter end shall come to destruction.
And he looked on the Kenite, and took up his parable, and 21
said,
Strong is thy dwelling place,
And thy nest is set in the rock.
Nevertheless [1]Kain shall be wasted, 22
[2]Until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

[1] Or, *the Kenites* [2] Or, *How long? Asshur &c.*

21. *The utterance on the Kenites.*

And he **saw** *the Kenite*] The singular adjective stands for the whole tribe; cf. 1 Sam. xv. 6, xxx. 29 (Heb.). In the next verse the tribe is called by the name of its reputed ancestor Ḳain.

Enduring *is thy dwelling place*] With this and the following line cf. Obad. *vv.* 3 f.

thy nest is set in the rock] The writer here plays upon the words *ḳēn* ('nest') and *Ḳayin* ('Ḳain').

Kain] The reputed ancestor of the tribe; cf. Jud. iv. 11 (R.V. marg.). The name (Heb. *Ḳayin*) denotes 'a lance,' and *Ḳênī* in Aramaic means 'a smith.' This has led to the conjecture that the Kenites were at one time thought of not as a tribe in the strict sense but as an hereditary guild or caste of smiths. Such castes are still found in Arabia and many parts of Africa. In this connexion it is interesting to notice that Tubal-Cain (Ḳayin) is named as 'the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron' (Gen. iv. 22). Further, Cain (Ḳayin) the son of Adam may very possibly be identical with the Ḳayin of the present verse, and his story (Gen. iv. 1—17) 'may preserve the recollection of some old collision between the agricultural and pastoral elements in prehistoric man.' See Driver, *Genesis*, pp. 70—73.

22. *Until Asshur* &c.] The Heb. can only be translated as in R.V. marg., 'How long? Asshur shall &c.' The words for 'how long' (*'ad māh*) may be a corruption of the name of some place in the east; 'unto—shall Asshur carry thee captive.' Asshur or Ashur is the true form of the name Assyria; cf. *v.* 24; Gen. x. 22; Hos. xiv. 3; Is. x. 5 (R.V. marg.).

23, 24. *Balaam's last prophetic message.* This is the most obscure of all the poems. The translation is uncertain, and no historical event is known to which the words can refer.

Kittim, derived from Kitti a town in Cyprus, was a name used for Greece; cf. Gen. x. 4 (where Kittim is reckoned as a son of Javan, i.e. Greece), 1 Mac. i. 1, viii. 5; it was also used sometimes for the Western maritime powers generally; cf. Jer. ii. 10, Ez. xxvii. 6. In Dan. xi. 30 it is even referred to the Romans; cf. Vulg. 'Italia' in the present passage.

23 And he took up his parable, and said, *R*
Alas, who shall live when God [1]doeth this?
24 But ships *shall come* from the coast of Kittim,
And they shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber,
And he also shall come to destruction.
25 And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place: *JE*
and Balak also went his way.

25 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to

[1] Or, *establisheth him*

23. *when God doeth this*] The only rendering which the words will bear is 'on account of God appointing him.' If *vv.* 21—24 were all one poem, as some think, 'him' might refer to Asshur, appointed by God as an instrument of destruction.

24. *ships* shall come...*Kittim*] *ships* **from the side** *of Kittim*. The clause has no verb, and, if the text is right, it must form the subject of the following verb 'shall afflict,' the intervening 'and' being disregarded.

Asshur and *Eber*. The two names appear to denote the world powers of the east; but the exact meaning of the name Eber is quite unknown.

And he also shall come to destruction] 'he' apparently refers to Asshur and Eber considered as one nation. After carrying the Kenites captive, Asshur will itself be destroyed by invaders from the west. There is, however, no support for this in history, unless Asshur be given the unusual meaning (which it bears in Ezr. vi. 22) of the Persian empire, which was overthrown by Alexander.

Various emendations throughout the two verses have been proposed (see Gray, *Numb.* pp. 377—9), but none of them has materially lightened the difficulties.

CHAP. XXV.

Two incidents in Moab.

1—5. The Israelites sinned with the women of Moab, and were invited by them to the sacrificial feasts of the local god (JE). 6—15. An Israelite brought a Midianite woman into the camp, and Phinehas, for his zeal in killing them both, received the promise that his descendants should perpetually possess the priesthood (P). The narratives are quite distinct, but both express condemnation of the immorality of the Israelites in consorting with foreign women. The interest of the former is prophetic, and is concerned with the struggle between the pure worship of Jehovah and the native local cults. The interest of the latter is ecclesiastical, and is concerned with the succession of the Aaronite priesthood.

1. *abode in Shittim*] The name has the definite article, and means

JE commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab: for they 2
called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods; and the
people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel 3
[1]joined himself unto [2]Baal-peor: and the anger of the LORD
was kindled against Israel. And the LORD said unto Moses, 4
Take all the chiefs of the people, and hang them up unto the
LORD before the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may
turn away from Israel. And Moses said unto the judges of 5
Israel, Slay ye every one his men that have joined themselves
P unto Baal-peor. | And, behold, one of the children of Israel 6
came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in

[1] Or, *yoked* [2] Or, *the Baal of Peor* See ch. xxiii. 28

'the Acacias.' The site is uncertain, but it lay somewhere in the steppes of Moab. The full form Abel-Shittim occurs in xxxiii. 49. It is perhaps to be identified with *Abila*, which Josephus locates 60 stadia from the Jordan. This verse may be considered the JE parallel to xxii. 1 (P). Notice that the possession of the territory by the Amorites is, as before (see on xxii. 41), disregarded, for the Israelites here come into contact not with Amorites but with Moabites.

2. *for they called*] **and** *they called*. The writer relates that the Israelites first came into immoral relations with the women, and then that the women, very naturally, invited them to join in their local religious festivities.

3. *Baal-peor*] i.e. the deity who was considered the Lord of the place Peor. See on xxiii. 28. Names of deities consisting of the name Baal with a local attribute are not uncommon in the O.T., and are found on Phoenician inscriptions. Thus there were many Baals (*Baālīm*) in different parts of the country (cf. 1 Sam. vii. 4, Hos. ii. 17).

4. *hang them up*] i.e. the offenders, not the chiefs. The form of execution denoted by the Heb. word is uncertain. It is the causative (Hiphil) form of the verb used of the dislocation of Jacob's thigh (Gen. xxxii. 25). Aquila understood it to mean 'impale,' Targ. 'crucify'; others, from the analogy of an Arabic word, explain it as 'to throw down,' as from a high rock. It occurs elsewhere only of the execution of Saul's sons (2 Sam. xxi. 6).

5. *every one his men*] Each judge was to execute the offenders that belonged to the division over which he had authority (see Ex. xviii. 25 f.).

6—15. *The zeal of Phinehas, and its reward.* The passage belongs to the period after the exile, when those only were recognised as priests who could trace their ancestry through Phinehas, and Eleazar his father, to Aaron.

the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation *P*
of the children of Israel, while they were weeping at the
7 door of the tent of meeting. And when Phinehas, the son of
Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from
the midst of the congregation, and took a spear in his hand;
8 and he went after the man of Israel into the [1]pavilion, and
thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the
woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from
9 the children of Israel. And those that died by the plague
were twenty and four thousand.
10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas, the
11 son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my
wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was jealous
with my jealousy among them, so that I consumed not the

[1] Or, *alcove*

6. *while they were weeping*] The reason for their weeping is not found till *vv.* 8 f.; a plague had been sent. The beginning of the narrative stating the reason for the plague has been lost. But it was probably a punishment for the general immorality of which *v.* 6 relates one instance.

It has been conjectured that the lost portion of the story related that Balaam persuaded the Midianites to seduce the Israelites into intermarriage with them in order to provoke Jehovah's anger. In this case Balaam lived (according to P) not in Mesopotamia or Ammon (see on xxii. 5) but in Midian. The conjecture receives support from xxxi. 8, 16.

8. *the pavilion*] Heb. *kubbāh*; a large vaulted tent; 'alcove' (R.V. marg.) has gained a different significance, but it is only the Arabic equivalent to the Heb. word with the article *al* prefixed. The word is not found elsewhere in the O.T. and its meaning is doubtful.

And *the plague was stayed*] The expression is quoted in Ps. cvi. 30 where the incident is referred to.

9. *twenty and four thousand*] S. Paul uses the narrative as a warning to Christians (1 Cor. x. 8). Either by a slip of memory or owing to a variant reading he gives the number as *three* and twenty thousand.

11. *jealous with my jealousy*] His jealousy was so deep and real that it adequately expressed the jealousy of Jehovah, rendering it unnecessary for Jehovah to express it further by consuming Israel. Cf. the 'godly sorrow' felt by the Corinthians with regard to a similar sin (2 Cor. vii. 9—11). The divine 'jealousy' is that which makes Him

P children of Israel in my jealousy. Wherefore say, Behold, I 12
give unto him my covenant of peace: and it shall be unto 13
him, and to his seed after him, the covenant of an everlasting
priesthood; because he was jealous for his God, and made
atonement for the children of Israel. Now the name of the 14
man of Israel that was slain, who was slain with the Midian-
itish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a fathers'
house among the Simeonites. And the name of the Midian- 15
itish woman that was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur;
he was head of the people of a fathers' house in Midian.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Vex the 16 17
Midianites, and smite them: for they vex you with their 18
wiles, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of
Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of the prince
of Midian, their sister, which was slain on the day of the
plague in the matter of Peor.

claim an exclusive right over His people. This right was violated when they gave themselves up to whoredom. Cf. Ex. xx. 5, xxxiv. 14, Nah. i. 2, Jas. iv. 5 (R.V. marg.).

12. *my covenant of peace*] Cf. Mal. ii. 5. The 'covenant' here is not a compact between two persons, but an unconditional promise on God's part.

13. *the covenant of an everlasting priesthood*]. This passage expressly confines the priesthood to the line of Aaron. In Jer. xxxiii. 21, Mal. ii. 4 f., 8 the covenant is given to the whole tribe of Levi. Other covenants spoken of in the O.T. are those given to Abram (with the sign of circumcision), to Noah (with the sign of the rainbow), to Israel at Sinai, and to David. See the writer's *Exodus*, pp. 150—4.

15. *the daughter of Zur*] Zur is named as one of the five Midianite kings, in xxxi. 8.

16—18 are an editorial note. The compiler who placed side by side the two narratives in *vv.* 1—5 and 6—15 here combines them in such a way as to represent the *Midianites* as responsible for tempting Israel in both cases. And at the same time he anticipates the command given to Moses in xxxi. 1.

CHAP. XXVI. P.

The second Census.

The plague related in xxv. 9 was the last of the punishments undergone by the Israelites for their sins and rebellions. When the wanderings were at an end, the numbers of the people would be very different to those at the first census at Sinai. And the priestly writer shews, by implication, how severe the punishments had been; in spite of the

26 And it came to pass after the plague, that the LORD *P*
spake unto Moses and unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the
2 priest, saying, Take the sum of all the congregation of the
children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, by
their fathers' houses, all that are able to go forth to war in
3 Israel. And Moses and Eleazar the priest spake with them
4 in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, saying, *Take*
the sum of the people, from twenty years old and upward; as
the LORD commanded Moses and the children of Israel,
which came forth out of the land of Egypt.
5 Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: the sons of Reuben;
of Hanoch, the family of the Hanochites: of Pallu, the
6 family of the Palluites: of Hezron, the family of the Hez-
7 ronites: of Carmi, the family of the Carmites. These are
the families of the Reubenites: and they that were numbered
8 of them were forty and three thousand and seven hundred
and thirty. And the sons of Pallu; Eliab. And the sons
9 of Eliab; Nemuel, and Dathan, and Abiram. These are
that Dathan and Abiram, which were called of the congre-
gation, who strove against Moses and against Aaron in the
10 company of Korah, when they strove against the LORD: and

increase of population which would naturally accrue by births, the numbers left in Moab are 1820 less than those reckoned at Sinai.

1—4. Moses and Eleazar are commanded by God to number the fighting men of 20 years of age and upwards.

4. *Take the sum of the people*] This is added conjecturally in E.VV., the opening words of the verse having been lost.

5—51. The twelve secular tribes are numbered, the sacred tribe of Levi being omitted. The names are based upon Gen. xlvi. 8—27, but with the addition of Ephraim and Manasseh, who, having been born in Egypt, could not be reckoned in Gen. among those who went down into Egypt.

The total number at the first census, thirty-eight years before (ch. i.) was 603,550; now it is 601,730. The order of the tribes is the same, except that Manasseh (*vv.* 29—34) precedes Ephraim (*vv.* 35—37). Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Ephraim and Naphtali have decreased in numbers, while the other seven have increased. The impossibility of the figures is shewn in note on i. 46.

9—11. The mention of Dathan and Abiram leads the writer, or a later editor, to add a note recalling the incidents of ch. xvi. He combines the story of Dathan and Abiram with that of Korah in such a way that the events are inextricably confused.

P the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died; what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men, and they became a sign. Notwithstanding the sons of Korah died not. 11

The sons of Simeon after their families: of [1]Nemuel, 12 the family of the Nemuelites: of Jamin, the family of the Jaminites: of [2]Jachin, the family of the Jachinites: of 13 [3]Zerah, the family of the Zerahites: of Shaul, the family of the Shaulites. These are the families of the Simeonites, 14 twenty and two thousand and two hundred.

The sons of Gad after their families: of [4]Zephon, the 15 family of the Zephonites: of Haggi, the family of the Haggites: of Shuni, the family of the Shunites: of [5]Ozni, the 16 family of the Oznites: of Eri, the family of the Erites: of 17 [6]Arod, the family of the Arodites: of Areli, the family of the Arelites. These are the families of the sons of Gad according 18 to those that were numbered of them, forty thousand and five hundred.

The sons of Judah, Er and Onan: and Er and Onan died 19 in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Judah after their 20 families were; of Shelah, the family of the Shelanites: of Perez, the family of the Perezites: of Zerah, the family of the Zerahites. And the sons of Perez were; of Hezron, 21 the family of the Hezronites: of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites. These are the families of Judah according to 22 those that were numbered of them, threescore and sixteen thousand and five hundred.

[1] In Gen. xlvi. 10, Ex. vi. 15, *Jemuel*
[2] In 1 Chr. iv. 24, *Jarib*
[3] In Gen. xlvi. 10, *Zohar*
[4] In Gen. xlvi. 16, *Ziphion*
[5] In Gen. xlvi. 16, *Ezbon*
[6] In Gen. xlvi. 16, *Arodi*

10. *and they became a sign*] This is a reference to xvi. 38; but there it is not the offenders but their fire-pans, beaten into plates for the altar, that are a sign.

11. **and** *the sons of Korah died not*] There is no mention of Korah's family in ch. xvi., but the inference might naturally be drawn from *v.* 32 that they were included in his body of adherents. This inference the writer felt it necessary to check, because in his day 'sons of Korah' were found in Jerusalem. They were a subdivision of the Levites, a guild which formed one of the temple choirs. To their hymnbook belonged Pss. xlii., xliv.—xlix., lxxxiv. f., lxxxvii. f. In *v.* 58 (below) they are called 'the family of the Korahites.'

23 The sons of Issachar after their families: *of* Tola, the *P*
family of the Tolaites: of Puvah, the family of the Punites:
24 of [1]Jashub, the family of the Jashubites: of Shimron, the
25 family of the Shimronites. These are the families of Issachar
according to those that were numbered of them, threescore
and four thousand and three hundred.
26 The sons of Zebulun after their families: of Sered, the
family of the Seredites: of Elon, the family of the Elonites:
27 of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites. These are the
families of the Zebulunites according to those that were
numbered of them, threescore thousand and five hundred.
28 The sons of Joseph after their families: Manasseh and
29 Ephraim. The sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the family of
the Machirites: and Machir begat Gilead: of Gilead, the
30 family of the Gileadites. These are the sons of Gilead: *of*
[2]Iezer, the family of the Iezerites: of Helek, the family of
31 the Helekites: and *of* Asriel, the family of the Asrielites:
32 and *of* Shechem, the family of the Shechemites: and *of*
Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites: and *of* Hepher,
33 the family of the Hepherites. And Zelophehad the son of
Hepher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the
daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah,
34 Milcah, and Tirzah. These are the families of Manasseh:
and they that were numbered of them were fifty and two
thousand and seven hundred.
35 These are the sons of Ephraim after their families: of
Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthelahites: of [3]Becher, the
family of the Becherites: of Tahan, the family of the
36 Tahanites. And these are the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran,
37 the family of the Eranites. These are the families of the
sons of Ephraim according to those that were numbered of
them, thirty and two thousand and five hundred. These are
the sons of Joseph after their families.
38 The sons of Benjamin after their families: of Bela, the
family of the Belaites: of Ashbel, the family of the Ash-
39 belites: of [4]Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites: of

[1] In Gen. xlvi. 13, *Iob* [2] In Josh. xvii. 2, *Abiezer*. See Judg. vi. 11, 24, 34 [3] In 1 Chr. vii. 20, *Bered* [4] In Gen. xlvi. 21, *Ehi* in 1 Chr. viii. 1, *Aharah*

P [1]Shephupham, the family of the Shuphamites: of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites. And the sons of Bela were 40
[2]Ard and Naaman: *of Ard*, the family of the Ardites: of Naaman, the family of the Naamites. These are the sons of 41
Benjamin after their families: and they that were numbered of them were forty and five thousand and six hundred.

These are the sons of Dan after their families: of 42
[3]Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These are the families of Dan after their families. All the families of the 43
Shuhamites, according to those that were numbered of them, were threescore and four thousand and four hundred.

The sons of Asher after their families: of Imnah, the 44
family of the Imnites: of Ishvi, the family of the Ishvites: of Beriah, the family of the Beriites. Of the sons of Beriah: 45
of Heber, the family of the Heberites: of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites. And the name of the daughter of Asher 46
was Serah. These are the families of the sons of Asher 47
according to those that were numbered of them, fifty and three thousand and four hundred.

The sons of Naphtali after their families: of Jahzeel, the 48
family of the Jahzeelites: of Guni, the family of the Gunites: of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites: of Shillem, the family of 49
the Shillemites. These are the families of Naphtali according 50
to their families: and they that were numbered of them were forty and five thousand and four hundred.

These are they that were numbered of the children of 51
Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Unto these 52
the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the 53
number of names. To the more thou shalt give the more 54
inheritance, and to the fewer thou shalt give the less inherit-

[1] In Gen. xlvi. 21, *Muppim, and Huppim* [2] In 1 Chr. viii. 3, *Addar*
[3] In Gen. xlvi. 23, *Hushim*

52—56. The manner in which Canaan is to be divided among the tribes. The territories are to be proportionate to the size of the several tribes.

54. *thou shalt give the more inheritance*] Moses was not allowed to enter Canaan; if, therefore, 'thou shalt give' is to be understood strictly,

ance: to every one according to those that were numbered *P*
55 of him shall his inheritance be given. Notwithstanding the
land shall be divided by lot: according to the names of the
56 tribes of their fathers they shall inherit. According to the
lot shall their inheritance be divided between the more and
the fewer.

57 And these are they that were numbered of the Levites
after their families: of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites:
of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites: of Merari, the
58 family of the Merarites. These are the families of Levi:
the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the
family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, the family
59 of the Korahites. And Kohath begat Amram. And the name

the allotment and distribution were to take place before his death, while the people were still in the land of Moab. This appears to be the view taken in the early passage Jud. i. 1—3. But according to P (Jos. xiii. 15—23, xiv. 1—5) the lots were not cast till the whole land was won. We must probably, therefore, understand 'thou shalt give' loosely—'thou shalt command that it be given.' This is more clearly expressed in xxxiii. 50—54.

according to those that were numbered of him] i.e. in proportion to his (the tribe's) numbers.

55. *the land shall be divided by lot*] Since the distribution was to be proportionate the purpose of the lot must only have been to decide roughly in what part of the country each tribe was to settle.

according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit] The meaning is doubtful. 'The names of the tribes of their fathers' appears to be a periphrasis for 'their tribes.' If so, the meaning is either that *individuals* shall in every case possess land within the region assigned to their tribe, or (perhaps better) that no smaller division than a whole tribe is to be taken account of in the general distribution, and the property of *clans* and *families* must be settled privately within each tribe.

57—62. The census of the Levites. They were numbered separately from the secular tribes, because they were not, as a tribe, to possess any land.

58. It is not here stated to which of the three families of *v.* 57 these five branches of the Levites belonged. (This is done in Ex. vi. 16—21. Libnites belonged to Gershon; Hebronites and Korahites to Kohath; Mahlites and Mushites to Merari.) The verse appears to be separate from *v.* 57, and to be derived from a different source.

59, 60. The Kohathites receive more detailed treatment; it was the most important of the families, because Moses and Aaron belonged to it.

P of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt: and she bare unto Amram Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister. And unto Aaron were 60
born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. And Nadab 61
and Abihu died, when they offered strange fire before the LORD. And they that were numbered of them were twenty 62
and three thousand, every male from a month old and upward: for they were not numbered among the children of Israel, because there was no inheritance given them among the children of Israel.

These are they that were numbered by Moses and 63
Eleazar the priest; who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho. But among 64
these there was not a man of them that were numbered by Moses and Aaron the priest; who numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. For the LORD had said of 65
them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

Then drew near the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of 27
Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of

61. See on iii. 4.

62. *twenty and three thousand*] At the first census the Levites numbered 22,000.

63—65. An editorial conclusion to the census. Not a man was reckoned who had been alive at the first census, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua.

CHAP. XXVII. P.

1—11. *A law on the inheritance of property.* The Hebrews always adhered firmly to the principle that landed property must not be alienated from the tribe or family to which it belonged. In early days, inheritance by daughters was not contemplated. If a man died without children, his widow might be married to his brother in order to bear sons who should inherit the property (Dt. xxv. 5—10; cf. Matt. xxii. 24). Or if a man wished to sell land, his next-of-kin had the first right of purchase (Jer. xxxii. 8). And the same principle underlies the law of the Jubile (Lev. xxv. 10, 31). The present law is also based upon the principle, but marks a new departure in the privileges accorded to women.

1. Since Manasseh is a tribe, and Machir and Gilead are tribal divisions, and Hepher (xxvi. 32, 1 K. iv. 10) is a family, it is probable

Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph: and *P*
these are the names of his daughters; Mahlah, Noah, and Hog-
2 lah, and Milcah, and Tirzah. And they stood before Moses, and
before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the
3 congregation, at the door of the tent of meeting, saying, Our
father died in the wilderness, and he was not among the
company of them that gathered themselves together against
the LORD in the company of Korah: but he died in his own
4 sin; and he had no sons. Why should the name of our father
be taken away from among his family, because he had no son?
Give unto us a possession among the brethren of our father.
5 6 And Moses brought their cause before the LORD. And the
7 LORD spake unto Moses, saying, The daughters of Zelophe-
had speak right: thou shalt surely give them a possession of
an inheritance among their father's brethren; and thou shalt
8 cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them. And
thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man
die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass
9 unto his daughter. And if he have no daughter, then ye shall
10 give his inheritance unto his brethren. And if he have no
brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's
11 brethren. And if his father have no brethren, then ye
shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman that is next to
him of his family, and he shall possess it: and it shall be

that Zelophehad and his five 'daughters' are all names taken from smaller divisions or clans, settled in particular towns in Gilead. See xxvi. 28—33 with Gray's notes. But the incident here related is regarded as an historical occurrence in the life of individuals. Its purpose is to introduce the law of inheritance.

3. *he died in his own sin*] in the ordinary sinfulness of a man, like the rest of his generation who died during the forty years in the wilderness. They point out that their father had not taken part in the sin of Korah's company, that is, he had not committed any crime great enough to deserve the alienation of the property from his family after his death.

Notice that the reference to Korah's company is in agreement with the main part of the P story in ch. xvi., in which Korah's company were *laymen* and not Levites; for it is implied that Zelophehad, who was a Manassite, might have been one of them.

8—11. A formal statement of the law of inheritance. Failing sons, the property passes to a daughter; failing daughters, to brothers; failing brothers, to uncles; and failing uncles, to the next-of-kin (see on v. 8).

P unto the children of Israel a statute of judgement, as the LORD commanded Moses.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Get thee up into this 12
mountain of Abarim, and behold the land which I have
given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen 13
it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy
brother was gathered: because ye rebelled against my word 14
in the wilderness of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, [1]to
sanctify me at the waters before their eyes. (These are the
waters of Meribah of Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.) And 15
Moses spake unto the LORD, saying, Let the LORD, the God 16
of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congrega-
tion, which may go out before them, and which may come 17

[1] See ch. xx. 12, 13

11. *a statute of judgement*] The expression recurs in xxxv. 29 only. It means 'a statute which embodies a fixed and authoritative custom.'

12—23 (P). *Moses views the land of Canaan, and Joshua is appointed to succeed him.*

12—14. The command to Moses to view the land from a mountain is not obeyed till Dt. xxxiv. (P). This long postponement might seem strange. But it must be remembered that before the greater part of Num. xxviii.—xxxvi. was added as an enlargement of P by later hands the book of Deut., which is represented, for the most part, as Moses' farewell address, stood in closer proximity to the present passage. When the compilation of the documents took place, an editor seems to have felt that the interval between the command and the fulfilment was unduly long, and therefore inserted the command a second time in Dt. xxxii. 48—52, which is a repetition of the present passage in an expanded form.

12. *this mountain of* **the** *Abarim*] See on xxi. 11. The spot is defined as 'the top of the Pisgah' in Dt. iii. 27 (D), and still more closely as 'Mount Nĕbo' in Dt. xxxii. 49, xxxiv. 1 (P).

13. *as Aaron thy brother*] See xx. 23—29 (P).

14. *because ye* **acted unfaithfully** *against my word*] The verb is characteristic of **P.** It is different from that in xx. 24. And see note on xx. 10, 11.

in the strife...to sanctify me] The same play on the words Meribah ('strife') and Kadesh ('sacred') as in xx. 3, 13. The words 'to sanctify me' (cf. xx. 12) are connected with 'my word,' i.e. my commandment. Ye rebelled against the command which I gave you to vindicate my holiness by speaking to the rock.

15—23. *The appointment of Joshua.*

16. *the God of the spirits of all flesh*] See on xvi. 22.

in before them, and which may lead them out, and which *P*
may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be
18 not as sheep which have no shepherd. And the LORD said
unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in
19 whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; and set
him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congrega-
20 tion; and give him a charge in their sight. And thou shalt
put of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of
21 the children of Israel may obey. And he shall stand before
Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him by the judgement
of the Urim before the LORD: at his word shall they go out,
and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the
22 children of Israel with him, even all the congregation. And
Moses did as the LORD commanded him: and he took
Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all

17. *as sheep which have no shepherd*] Cf. 1 K. xxii. 17; Matt. ix. 36=Mk. vi. 34.

18. *a man in whom is* (om. 'the') *spirit*] An influence proceeding from God already dwells in him. This was not the frenzied spirit of prophecy (xi. 25 f.) but as in Dt. xxxiv. 9 'the spirit of wisdom,' prudence, capacity.

and lay thine hand upon him] This action has more than one significance in the O.T. For the meaning in viii. 10 see note there. In Gen. xlviii. 14 it accompanies a solemn blessing; here it symbolizes the handing on of Moses' office to Joshua. In later Jewish times it was employed in admitting a person to the position of Rabbi. And in the Christian Church it remains to this day as the apostolic rite of ordination (cf. Acts vi. 6, xiii. 3; 1 Tim. iii. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6), in which all three meanings—blessing, succession to office, and authority to teach—are combined.

19. *and give him a charge*] *and* **thou shalt command him**; i.e. declare to him solemnly the way in which he is to govern.

20. *thou shalt put* **some** *of* **thy majesty** *upon him*] The subst. denotes visible splendour and dignity. No man could be thought worthy to receive the whole of Moses' majesty; but Joshua was to receive enough of it to make the people honour and obey him. Cf. xi. 17.

21. *the Urim*] The sacred lot by which the priests ascertained the will of God.

On the Urim and Tummim see the writer's note on Ex. xxviii. 30.

This verse exemplifies the thought that Joshua's dignity was to be less than that of Moses. Joshua must enquire of God's will through the priest, whereas Moses always received commands straight from God Himself.

P the congregation: and he laid his hands upon him, and gave 23
him a charge, as the LORD spake by the hand of Moses.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the 28
2

CHAPS. XXVIII, XXIX. P.

The amounts of public offerings at the sacred seasons.

The following are the seasons for which offerings are enjoined:—(1) every morning and evening (xxviii. 3—8), (2) the Sabbath (*vv.* 9f.), (3) the first day of each month (*vv.* 11—15) [the Passover is mentioned (*v.* 16), but no offering is commanded], (4) the seven days of Unleavened Cakes (*vv.* 17—25), (5) the Feast of Weeks (*vv.* 26—31), (6) the first day of the sacred seventh month, i.e. the Feast of Trumpets (xxix. 1—6), (7) the tenth day of the seventh month, i.e. the Day of Atonement (*vv.* 7—11), (8) the fifteenth to the twenty-first day of the seventh month, i.e. the seven days of the Feast of Booths (*vv.* 12—34), (9) the additional, eighth, day of the Feast of Booths (*vv.* 35—38). Nos. (7) and (9) shew that the list is post-exilic, for neither was observed before the time of Ezra.

The offerings are of four kinds:—burnt-offerings (the flesh of animals), meal-offerings (meal and oil), drink-offerings or libations (wine), and sin-offerings (one he-goat). Similar lists, not, however, so complete and systematic, are found in the Law of Holiness (Lev. xxiii.) and Ezek. xlv. 18—xlvi. 15. The amounts of the meal-offerings and libations have already been given in xv. 1—16. The animals to be offered are as follows:—4 lambs for a burnt-offering on the Sabbath, and 2 on each of the other days in the week; on all the holy-days except the Sabbath one he-goat for a sin-offering; and *in addition* to these the following animals:

	Lambs	Rams	Bullocks
1st day of each month	7	1	2
Each of the 7 days of Unleavened Cakes	7	1	2
Feast of Weeks	7	1	2
1st day of 7th month	7	1	1
10th day of 7th month	7	1	1
Each of the 7 days of the Feast of Booths also 13 bullocks on the 1st day, and decreasing by one on each succeeding day.	14	2	
8th day of the Feast of Booths	7	1	1

Three features distinguish this system in a marked manner from the celebrations of festivals before the exile: (*a*) the exact dates, (*b*) the fixed quantity of the offerings, (*c*) the nature of the offerings. (*a*) Before the exile the festivals of Unleavened Cakes[1], Weeks and Booths were connected with the stages in the harvest, the dates of which would necessarily vary in different years, and in different parts of the country. (*b*) The quantities of the offerings were proportional to the wealth and

[1] This was observed 'in the month Abib.'

children of Israel, and say unto them, My oblation, my [1]food *P*
for my offerings made by fire, of a sweet savour unto me,
3 shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season. [2]And
thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire
which ye shall offer unto the LORD; he-lambs of the first
year without blemish, two day by day, for a continual burnt
4 offering. The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and
5 the other lamb shalt thou offer [3]at even; and the tenth part
of an ephah of fine flour for a meal offering, mingled with the
6 fourth part of an hin of beaten oil. It is a continual burnt
offering, which was ordained in mount Sinai for a sweet
7 savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And the
drink offering thereof shall be the fourth part of an hin for
the one lamb: in the holy place shalt thou pour out a drink
8 offering of strong drink unto the LORD. And the other lamb
shalt thou offer at even: as the meal offering of the morning,
and as the drink offering thereof, thou shalt offer it, an offering
made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

9 And on the sabbath day two he-lambs of the first year
without blemish, and two tenth parts *of an ephah* of fine flour
for a meal offering, mingled with oil, and the drink offering
10 thereof: this is the burnt offering of every sabbath, beside
the continual burnt offering, and the drink offering thereof.

11 And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a
burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one
12 ram, seven he-lambs of the first year without blemish; and
three tenth parts *of an ephah* of fine flour for a meal offering,

[1] Heb. *bread* [2] See Ex. xxix. 38—42
[3] Heb. *between the two evenings*

willingness of the individual worshipper (Dt. xvi. 10, 17). (*c*) There were no sin-offerings, and the sacrifices included 'peace-offerings,' in which the worshippers had a share, so that they could 'rejoice' at the festal meal (*id. vv.* 11, 15).

2. *my food*] In primitive days in Israel (as in many other nations, e.g. Babylonians, Greeks and Romans) it was believed that the deity really ate and drank the offerings (cf. Jud. ix. 13). By the time that this chapter was written, such notions had, of course, long passed away, but the ancient ritual language survived. See W. R. Smith, *Rel. Sem.*[2] p. 224. On the following words see note on xv. 3.

6. *which was ordained*] in Ex. xxix. 38—42.

P mingled with oil, for each bullock; and two tenth parts of
fine flour for a meal offering, mingled with oil, for the one
ram; and a several tenth part of fine flour mingled with oil 13
for a meal offering unto every lamb; for a burnt offering of
a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD.
And their drink offerings shall be half an hin of wine for a 14
bullock, and the third part of an hin for the ram, and the
fourth part of an hin for a lamb: this is the burnt offering of
every month throughout the months of the year. And one 15
he-goat for a sin offering unto the LORD; it shall be offered
beside the continual burnt offering, and the drink offering
thereof.

And in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the 16
month, is the LORD'S passover. And on the fifteenth day 17
of this month shall be a feast: seven days shall unleavened
bread be eaten. In the first day shall be an holy convoca- 18
tion; ye shall do no servile work: but ye shall offer an 19
offering made by fire, a burnt offering unto the LORD; two
young bullocks, and one ram, and seven he-lambs of the first
year: they shall be unto you without blemish: and their 20
meal offering, fine flour mingled with oil: three tenth parts
shall ye offer for a bullock, and two tenth parts for the ram;
a several tenth part shalt thou offer for every lamb of the 21
seven lambs; and one he-goat for a sin offering, to make 22
atonement for you. Ye shall offer these beside the burnt 23
offering of the morning, which is for a continual burnt
offering. After this manner ye shall offer daily, for seven 24
days, the [1]food of the offering made by fire, of a sweet
savour unto the LORD: it shall be offered beside the con-
tinual burnt offering, and the drink offering thereof. And 25

[1] Heb. *bread*

16. The verse prescribes no offerings, but merely mentions the Passover as one of the holy-days of the year. It may have been a later insertion, taken from Lev. xxiii. 5 (H). If so, it is probable that *v.* 17 originally began 'And in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the month.'

18. *ye shall do no* **laborious** *work*] The expression is found only in H (Lev. xxiii. 7, 8 &c.) and in this and the following chapter. It is not only the work of slaves that is forbidden, as E.VV. might suggest, but all business or occupation that requires labour.

on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye *P*
shall do no servile work.
26 Also in the day of the firstfruits, when ye offer a new meal
offering unto the LORD in your *feast of* weeks, ye shall have
27 an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: but ye
shall offer a burnt offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD;
two young bullocks, one ram, seven he-lambs of the first
28 year; and their meal offering, fine flour mingled with oil,
three tenth parts for each bullock, two tenth parts for the
29 one ram, a several tenth part for every lamb of the seven
30 lambs; one he-goat, to make atonement for you. Beside
31 the continual burnt offering, and the meal offering thereof,
ye shall offer them (they shall be unto you without blemish),
and their drink offerings.
29 And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month,
ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile
2 work: it is a day of blowing of trumpets unto you. And ye
shall offer a burnt offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD;
one young bullock, one ram, seven he-lambs of the first year
3 without blemish: and their meal offering, fine flour mingled
with oil, three tenth parts for the bullock, two tenth parts for
4 the ram, and one tenth part for every lamb of the seven
5 lambs: and one he-goat for a sin offering, to make atone-
6 ment for you: beside the burnt offering of the new moon,
and the meal offering thereof, and the continual burnt offer-
ing and the meal offering thereof, and their drink offerings,
according unto their ordinance, for a sweet savour, an offering
made by fire unto the LORD.
7 And on the tenth day of this seventh month ye shall
have an holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls;
8 ye shall do no manner of work: but ye shall offer a burnt
offering unto the LORD for a sweet savour; one young bul-
lock, one ram, seven he-lambs of the first year; they shall be
9 unto you without blemish: and their meal offering, fine flour

xxix. 1. *a day of blowing of trumpets*] See x. 10.

7. *ye shall afflict your souls*] An expression which denoted *fasting*; cf. xxx. 13, Ps. xxxv. 13, Is. lviii. 3, 5. Here it is the great annual fast, still strictly observed by orthodox Jews, on the Day of Atonement; cf. Lev. xvi. 29, xxiii. 27—29, 32.

P mingled with oil, three tenth parts for the bullock, two tenth parts for the one ram, a several tenth part for every lamb of the seven lambs: one he-goat for a sin offering; beside the sin offering of atonement, and the continual burnt offering, and the meal offering thereof, and their drink offerings. 10 11

And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work, and ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: and ye shall offer a burnt offering, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; thirteen young bullocks, two rams, fourteen he-lambs of the first year; they shall be without blemish: and their meal offering, fine flour mingled with oil, three tenth parts for every bullock of the thirteen bullocks, two tenth parts for each ram of the two rams, and a several tenth part for every lamb of the fourteen lambs: and one he-goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, the meal offering thereof, and the drink offering thereof. 12 13 14 15 16

And on the second day *ye shall offer* twelve young bullocks, two rams, fourteen he-lambs of the first year without blemish: and their meal offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their number, after the ordinance: and one he-goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and the meal offering thereof, and their drink offerings. 17 18 19

And on the third day eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen he-lambs of the first year without blemish; and their meal offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their number, after the ordinance: and one he-goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and the meal offering thereof, and the drink offering thereof. 20 21 22

And on the fourth day ten bullocks, two rams, fourteen he-lambs of the first year without blemish: their meal offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the 23 24

11. *beside the sin offering of atonement*] An incidental reference to the solemn ceremony which gave its name to the day. It is described in Lev. xvi., on which Heb. ix. 7—12, 23—28 is based.

rams, and for the lambs, according to their number, after *P*
25 the ordinance: and one he goat for a sin offering; beside
the continual burnt offering, the meal offering thereof, and
the drink offering thereof.
26 And on the fifth day nine bullocks, two rams, fourteen
27 he-lambs of the first year without blemish: and their meal
offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the
rams, and for the lambs, according to their number, after
28 the ordinance: and one he-goat for a sin offering; beside
the continual burnt offering, and the meal offering thereof,
and the drink offering thereof.
29 And on the sixth day eight bullocks, two rams, fourteen
30 he-lambs of the first year without blemish: and their meal
offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the
rams, and for the lambs, according to their number, after
31 the ordinance: and one he-goat for a sin offering; beside
the continual burnt offering, the meal offering thereof, and
the drink offerings thereof.
32 And on the seventh day seven bullocks, two rams,
33 fourteen he-lambs of the first year without blemish: and
their meal offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks,
for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their number,
34 after the ordinance: and one he-goat for a sin offering;
beside the continual burnt offering, the meal offering there-
of, and the drink offering thereof.
35 On the eighth day ye shall have a [1]solemn assembly: ye
36 shall do no servile work: but ye shall offer a burnt offering,
an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD:
one bullock, one ram, seven he-lambs of the first year with-

[1] See Lev. xxiii. 36

35. *a solemn assembly*] **an assembly.** The Heb. word *'aṣereth* contains nothing which implies that the assembly was of a specially solemn character. Before the exile an *'aṣereth* was held on the seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Cakes (Dt. xvi. 8); and see Is. i. 13 (R.V. 'solemn meeting'), Am. v. 21. After the exile it was used, as here, of an assembly on the additional eighth day of the Feast of Booths (Lev. xxiii. 36, Neh. viii. 18), and on a special fast day (Joel i. 14, ii. 15); and the Chronicler relates that such an assembly was held as the climax of rejoicing on the eighth day (contrast 1 K. viii. 66) at the dedication of Solomon's temple (2 Ch. vii. 9).

P out blemish: their meal offering and their drink offerings 37
for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, shall be
according to their number, after the ordinance: and one 38
he-goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt
offering, and the meal offering thereof, and the drink
offering thereof.

These ye shall offer unto the LORD in your set feasts, 39
beside your vows, and your freewill offerings, for your burnt
offerings, and for your meal offerings, and for your drink
offerings, and for your peace offerings. And Moses told 40
the children of Israel according to all that the LORD com-
manded Moses.

And Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes of the 30
children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the LORD
hath commanded. When a man voweth a vow unto the 2
LORD, or sweareth an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he
shall not [1]break his word; he shall do according to all that

[1] Heb. *profane*

CHAP. XXX. P.

The performance of vows by women.

The chapter opens with the command (*v.* 2) that a man shall always observe a vow which he has made. But the rest of the chapter deals with vows made by women. The following rules are laid down:—(1) an unmarried woman living in her father's house, or a married woman living with her husband, is bound to perform her vow only if the father or the husband respectively raises no objection at the time that he hears of the vow having being made (*vv.* 3—8, 10—14); (2) a widow or a divorced woman must perform her vow (*v.* 9); (3) if the father, or husband, makes no objection at the time, but subsequently prevents his daughter, or wife, from performing her vow, the guilt rests upon him.

2. Two kinds of pledges are here mentioned, a *vow* and an *obligation*. A *vow* is a promise to give something to God. Such votive offerings were frequent in times of danger or special need (cf. Gen. xxviii. 20—22, Jud. xi. 30 f.). In post-exilic times they would often consist in gifts to the temple (cf. Lk. xxi. 5 *ἀναθήματα*). An *obligation* is a prohibition laid upon oneself, a pledge of abstinence; e.g from wine, as in the case of a Nazirite (ch. vi.), or from food (1 Sam. xiv. 24, Acts xxiii. 21); see also Ps. cxxxii. 3 f.

he shall not **profane** *his word*] To break a solemn promise is an act of profanation. The importance of keeping vows is emphasized in Dt. xxiii. 21 ff., Eccl. v. 4 f.; cf. Mt. v. 33.

3 proceedeth out of his mouth. Also when a woman voweth P
a vow unto the LORD, and bindeth herself by a bond, being
4 in her father's house, in her youth; and her father heareth
her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul,
and her father holdeth his peace at her: then all her vows
shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her
5 soul shall stand. But if her father disallow her in the day
that he heareth; none of her vows, or of her bonds where-
with she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the LORD
6 shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her. And if
she be *married* to a husband, while her vows are upon her,
or the rash utterance of her lips, wherewith she hath bound
7 her soul; and her husband hear it, and hold his peace at
her in the day that he heareth it: then her vows shall stand,
and her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul shall
8 stand. But if her husband disallow her in the day that he
heareth it; then he shall make void her vow which is upon
her, and the rash utterance of her lips, wherewith she hath
9 bound her soul: and the LORD shall forgive her. But the
vow of a widow, or of her that is divorced, *even* every thing
wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand against her.
10 And if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound her soul
11 by a bond with an oath, and her husband heard it, and held
his peace at her, and disallowed her not; then all her vows

all that proceedeth out of his mouth] A vow is not a vow until it has been expressed in words (cf. xxxii. 24, Jud. xi. 35 f.). The Rabbis of a later time further enjoined in the Mishna that the mere utterance of words without a real intention is not binding. 'No utterance is binding unless the mouth and the heart agree.'

3. *in her youth*] Old unmarried women are not mentioned. But since marriage was, in the eyes of a Jew, a religious duty, this class of women must have been very small, and would probably be subject to the same rule as widows.

4. *heareth her vow*] i.e. comes to hear of it; *vv.* 7, 8 shew that it does not necessarily mean that he is present when she actually utters her vow.

5. *disallow her*] lit. 'oppose her,' express disapproval.

6. *while her vows are upon her*] If at the time of her marriage she was still bound by some vow or pledge of abstinence, which she had previously taken with her father's approval.

7, 8. When her husband comes to hear of it (see *v.* 4), he may then either annul it if he wishes, or by tacit approval allow it to stand.

P shall stand, and every bond wherewith she bound her soul shall stand. But if her husband made them null and void 12
in the day that he heard them; then whatsoever proceeded out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning the bond of her soul, shall not stand: her husband hath made them void; and the LORD shall forgive her. Every vow, and 13
every binding oath to afflict the soul, her husband may establish it, or her husband may make it void. But if her 14
husband altogether hold his peace at her from day to day; then he establisheth all her vows, or all her bonds, which are upon her: he hath established them, because he held his peace at her in the day that he heard them. But if he 15
shall make them null and void after that he hath heard them; then he shall bear her iniquity. These are the 16
statutes, which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter, being in her youth, in her father's house.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Avenge the 31 2

13. *to afflict the soul*] See on xxix. 7.

15. If, after tacitly consenting at the time that he heard of the vow, he compels her at a later time to break it, then Jehovah will not (as in the foregoing cases) forgive, but the iniquity will rest upon the husband and not upon the woman.

CHAP. XXXI. P.

The sacred war against Midian.

The narrative in this chapter is of a peculiar character. It belongs to a late date in Hebrew Biblical literature, when the practice was becoming common of conveying religious instruction by means of narrative. One form of narrative uttered with a purely religious or moral purpose was the *Parable*, of which a few instances are found in the O.T., and many in the New. But another form, which was very common in post-Biblical literature, is known as the *Midrash*. 'The Midrash may be defined as an imaginative development of a thought or theme suggested by Scripture, especially a didactic or homiletic exposition, or an edifying religious story' (Driver). It is certain that such stories existed within the period of the O.T., for there are two references to them (2 Ch. xiii. 22, xxiv. 27 R.V. 'commentary'). The *Midrash* referred to in these passages was probably a writing which emphasized the religious truths underlying the narratives of the kings by enlarging upon the narratives themselves in an imaginative manner. They were not intended to be, in any strict sense, historical, though they introduced

children of Israel of the Midianites: afterward shalt thou *P*
3 be gathered unto thy people. And Moses spake unto the
people, saying, Arm ye men from among you for the war,
that they may go against Midian, to execute the LORD'S
4 vengeance on Midian. Of every tribe a thousand, through-
5 out all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war. So
there were delivered, out of the thousands of Israel, a
thousand of every tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.
6 And Moses sent them, a thousand of every tribe, to the
war, them and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the
war, with the vessels of the sanctuary and the trumpets for

historical personages and events. The present chapter has all the appearance of a *Midrash*. The writer wishes to convey three pieces of instruction which he felt to be important:—(1) the victorious success which should ideally attend a holy war, waged against an enemy who had enticed Israel into grievous sin (*vv.* 1—18); (2) the purification necessary after contact with the dead (*vv.* 19—24); (3) the right method of dividing the spoil (*vv.* 25—54). In each case he develops a thought or theme suggested by Scripture:—(1) is based on xxv. 6—9; (2) on ch. xix.; (3) probably on 1 S. xxx. 24 f. It is not unlikely that the story as a whole is based on a real historical tradition of a fight with Midian, but the numbers of the slain and of the spoil are alone enough to shew that in its present form it is imaginative and ideal.

1—18. *The utter destruction of every Midianite*, with the exception of the virgins who are to be kept as spoil.

2. This command is anticipated by an editor in xxv. 16ff. See note there.

4. The selection of 1,000 soldiers from each tribe is purely artificial. The larger ones could send a much greater number.

5. **and** *there were delivered*] The use of this verb וַיִּמָּסְרוּ would, if the reading were certain, mark the chapter as a late composition. It occurs in *v.* 16 (see, however, note), but not elsewhere in the O.T., while it is frequent in post-Biblical Heb. and in Aramaic. But LXX. has καὶ ἐξηριθμησαν, and perhaps the true reading is וַיִּסָּפְרוּ '*and there were* **numbered**.'

6. The war being of a strictly religious character, the soldiers were apparently led not by Moses or Joshua but by Phinehas the priest, who had previously displayed his zeal against the Midianites (xxv. 6—8). Eleazar the chief priest is represented as staying behind in the camp, perhaps from fear of pollution by contact with the dead.

the vessels of the sanctuary] The word rendered 'vessels' is a general term which may denote any utensils or objects. It has been suggested that the writer had in mind the ephod containing the Urim and Tummim by which Phinehas could enquire of God concerning the conduct of the

P the alarm in his hand. And they warred against Midian, as 7
the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew every male.
And they slew the kings of Midian with the rest of their 8
slain; Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, the
five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they
slew with the sword. And the children of Israel took 9
captive the women of Midian and their little ones; and all
their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods, they
took for a prey. And all their cities in the places wherein 10
they dwelt, and all their encampments, they burnt with fire.
And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of man 11
and of beast. And they brought the captives, and the prey, 12
and the spoil, unto Moses, and unto Eleazar the priest, and
unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the
camp at the plains of Moab, which are by the Jordan at
Jericho.

And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes 13
of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the
camp. And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, 14
the captains of thousands and the captains of hundreds,
which came from the service of the war. And Moses said 15

battle; but it is doubtful whether that right would be ascribed to any but the high priest (cf. xxvii. 21).

7—12. In this ideal picture of the war nothing is said of the place where the battle was fought, nor the length of time occupied by it, nor any details of the fight. It was a rapid and sweeping conquest.

7. *they slew every male*] An imaginative description of success. If it were historically true, Midian would have disappeared from history; but they are found not long afterwards as one of Israel's most troublesome neighbours (Jud. vi.—viii.).

8. The five names of the kings may have been derived from an historical kernel of the story. They occur in the same order in Jos. xiii. 21; but there the tradition is different, since they are not only 'princes of Midian' but 'chiefs of Sihon,' who were slain in the battle against Sihon. There, as here, Balaam is mentioned in conjunction with them.

Zur] is mentioned in xxv. 15 as the head of a Midianite family.

Balaam also] See on xxv. 6.

10. *their encampments*] A word specially used to denote the circular encampment of a nomad tribe: cf. Gen. xxv. 16.

15—18. Commands to complete the destruction of the enemy. All male children and all women who are not virgins are to be killed in cold blood. This cruel command ascribed to Moses dates from an age when

16 unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? Behold, *P*
these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of
Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter
of Peor, and so the plague was among the congregation of
17 the LORD. Now therefore kill every male among the little
ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying
18 with him. But all the women children, that have not known
19 man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves. And
encamp ye without the camp seven days: whosoever hath
killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain,
purify yourselves on the third day and on the seventh day,
20 ye and your captives. And as to every garment, and all
that is made of skin, and all work of goats' *hair*, and all
21 things made of wood, ye shall purify yourselves. And

the Jews were approaching their narrowest and hardest state of exclusiveness, when piety consisted in rigid separateness from everything foreign. It need cause no difficulty to Christians who have received the command 'Love your enemies.'

16. The wording of this verse is obscure in the Heb., but the R.V. gives the general sense. The rendering 'to *commit* trespass' is obtained by adopting a probable emendation, לְמַעַל, for the late and difficult word לִמְסֹר 'to deliver' (see *v.* 5).

through the counsel of Balaam] Perhaps better **in the matter** *of Balaam*. This is a reference to an incident which is now lost, but which probably preceded xxv. 6 (see note there).

with regard to *the matter of Peor*] The writer refers in this clause to the quite distinct narrative in xxv. 1—5. In Rev. ii. 14 reference is made to the enticement by Balaam both to idolatry and to immorality.

19—24. *The purification necessary after contact with the dead.* Moses bids all who are defiled to remain outside the camp for seven days and perform the requisite ritual of purification.

19. *purify yourselves*] The same word as in viii. 21, '*unrin* yourselves.' Purification after battle is a custom found among various primitive tribes. The Hebrews had not yet received the higher teaching that only 'the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile the man' (Mk. vii. 15).

20. *all that is made of skin*] such as sandals, saddles, coverings for packages &c.

work of goats' hair] such as tent-coverings (Ex. xxv. 4) and bed-coverings (1 Sam. xix. 13, 16).

21—24. Further injunctions given by Eleazar, drawing a distinction between objects which could not stand purification by fire, and metals which could.

P Eleazar the priest said unto the men of war which went to
the battle, This is the statute of the law which the LORD
hath commanded Moses: howbeit the gold, and the silver, 22
the brass, the iron, the tin, and the lead, every thing that 23
may abide the fire, ye shall make to go through the fire, and
it shall be clean; nevertheless it shall be purified with the
water of [1]separation: and all that abideth not the fire ye
shall make to go through the water. And ye shall wash 24
your clothes on the seventh day, and ye shall be clean, and
afterward ye shall come into the camp.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the sum 25
of the prey that was taken, both of man and of beast, thou, 26
and Eleazar the priest, and the heads of the fathers' *houses*
of the congregation: and divide the prey into two parts; 27
between the men skilled in war, that went out to battle, and
all the congregation: and levy a tribute unto the LORD of 28
the men of war that went out to battle: one soul of five

[1] Or, *impurity*

23. *the water of* **impurity**] Its preparation and use are described in ch. xix.

to go **through water**] i.e. ordinary pure water, not the 'water of impurity' as R.V. suggests. Objects which will stand the fire must *pass through* it, and then their purification must be completed by the application of the specially prepared mixture. Objects, on the other hand, which cannot stand the fire, must *pass through* ordinary water instead of fire. It is perhaps implied that their purification must afterwards be completed, as in the former case, by the special mixture.

25—54. *The apportionment of the spoil.* Those who fought and those who remained behind were to receive equal shares. This was an ancient custom, which was traced to the action of David (1 Sam. xxx. 24 f.). But before the appropriation by individuals, a religious tax was to be paid. The fighters were to pay from their share $\frac{1}{500}$th to the priests, and the others $\frac{1}{50}$th to the Levites. Such a tax is not mentioned elsewhere in the O.T., but perhaps, like the foregoing regulation, it had an ancient custom behind it. Mohammed, whose religion was ultimately based on the O.T., enjoined a similar tax of $\frac{1}{5}$th (*Koran* viii. 42, cited by Gray).

28. *levy a tribute*] lit. 'lift off a fixed proportion.' The verb has the technical sense which is more often found in the corresponding subst. *terūmāh* (*v.* 29); see on v. 9.

one soul **out of** (every) *five hundred*] The word *nephesh* ('soul')

hundred, *both* of the persons, and of the beeves, and of the P
29 asses, and of the flocks: take it of their half, and give it
30 unto Eleazar the priest, for the LORD'S heave offering. And
of the children of Israel's half, thou shalt take one drawn
out of every fifty, of the persons, of the beeves, of the asses,
and of the flocks, *even* of all the cattle, and give them unto
the Levites, which keep the charge of the tabernacle of the
31 LORD. And Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD
32 commanded Moses. Now the prey, over and above the
booty which the men of war took, was six hundred thousand
33 and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep, and three-
34 score and twelve thousand beeves, and threescore and one
35 thousand asses, and thirty and two thousand persons in all,
of the women that had not known man by lying with him.
36 And the half, which was the portion of them that went out
to war, was in number three hundred thousand and thirty
37 thousand and seven thousand and five hundred sheep: and
the LORD'S tribute of the sheep was six hundred and three-
38 score and fifteen. And the beeves were thirty and six
thousand; of which the LORD'S tribute was threescore and
39 twelve. And the asses were thirty thousand and five
hundred; of which the LORD'S tribute was threescore and
40 one. And the persons were sixteen thousand; of whom the
41 LORD'S tribute was thirty and two persons. And Moses
gave the tribute, which was the LORD'S heave offering, unto

denotes the life or animating principle of every living creature, man or beast, and here stands for an 'individual' person or a 'head' of cattle.

the beeves] an archaic plural of 'beef,' used for the live animals; cf. Shakespeare, *Merch. of Venice*, I. iii. 68, 'flesh of muttons, beefs or goats.' The word occurs in R.V. and A.V. five times in this chapter, and in Lev. xxii. 19, 21 (R.V. in the latter verse 'herd').

32. *over and above the booty*] **the remainder of** *the booty*. The revisers connected the words with *v.* 53 (see marg. there), but that is concerned only with the private looting of gold ornaments. Here 'the booty' is synonymous with 'the prey,' and the words may be paraphrased 'the prey, or rather that which remained of it.' That which was captured on the field of battle would be diminished from a variety of causes, e.g. the necessary slaughter of animals for food, possibly the death from hardships on the return journey of some among the prisoners who were ill or infirm; also by the slaughter commanded in *v.* 17.

P Eleazar the priest, as the LORD commanded Moses. And 42
of the children of Israel's half, which Moses divided off
from the men that warred, (now the congregation's half was 43
three hundred thousand and thirty thousand, seven thousand
and five hundred sheep, and thirty and six thousand beeves, 44
and thirty thousand and five hundred asses, and sixteen 45 46
thousand persons;) even of the children of Israel's half, 47
Moses took one drawn out of every fifty, both of man and
of beast, and gave them unto the Levites, which kept the
charge of the tabernacle of the LORD; as the LORD com-
manded Moses. And the officers which were over the 48
thousands of the host, the captains of thousands, and the
captains of hundreds, came near unto Moses: and they said 49
unto Moses, Thy servants have taken the sum of the men of
war which are under our charge, and there lacketh not one
man of us. And we have brought the LORD'S oblation, 50
what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, ankle chains,
and bracelets, signet-rings, earrings, and [1]armlets, to make
atonement for our souls before the LORD. And Moses and 51
Eleazar the priest took the gold of them, even all wrought
jewels. And all the gold of the heave offering that they 52
offered up to the LORD, of the captains of thousands, and of
the captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven
hundred and fifty shekels. ([2]*For* the men of war had taken 53
booty, every man for himself.) And Moses and Eleazar 54
the priest took the gold of the captains of thousands and of
hundreds, and brought it into the tent of meeting, for a
memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD.

[1] Or, *necklaces* [2] See ver. 32

49. The officers report the safe return of every single Israelite soldier. No element of success must be absent from the ideal picture of a sacred victory.

50. *jewels of gold*] Golden ornaments were taken from the Midianites when Gideon won his victory (Jud. viii. 24—26). They were worn by roving nomads and traders, such as the Midianites were (cf. Gen. xxxvii. 28), more than by the members of settled communities. This seems to be the meaning of the parenthesis in Jud. viii. 24, where 'Ishmaelites' is apparently a general term for nomads.

32 Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad *P*
had a very great multitude of cattle: and when they saw the

CHAP. XXXII.

The assignment of land to tribes on the east of Jordan.

The chapter as a whole is the work of P, but *vv.* 39, 41 f. are much earlier, and must be assigned either to JE or to an ancient document akin to JE.

The writers of Israelite history felt it to be a matter of importance to explain how it was that certain of the tribes lived on the east of Jordan, separate from the main body of the nation. The traditions bearing on the subject differed greatly in many details, and the results are somewhat confusing. It will be noticed that, with the exception of *vv.* 33, 39—42, the chapter deals only with Reuben and Gad. These two tribes asked permission to settle east of the Jordan because they possessed large herds and flocks (*vv.* 1—5). Moses was angry at what appeared to be their wish to desert the main body, and said that they would discourage the rest of Israel in their efforts to win Canaan (*vv.* 6—15). But they explained that they were willing, after having built dwelling-places for their cattle and families, to go with the rest of Israel until the conquests west of Jordan were completed (*vv.* 16—19). And to this Moses consented, charging Eleazar and Joshua to see that it was carried out (*vv.* 20—32). The names of their towns are enumerated in *vv.* 34—38. They lay in the territory which Israel had already taken from Sihon (xxi. 21—32).

But there are two elements in the chapter which cause confusion. (1) In *v.* 33 the *half tribe of Manasseh* is coupled with Reuben and Gad as receiving this territory from Moses; and in *v.* 40 Moses gives it to Machir, a 'son,' i.e. a clan or division, of Manasseh. It seems probable, therefore, that the words in *v.* 33, 'and unto the half tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph' (or perhaps the whole verse), and *v.* 40 are later additions to P's narrative. The tradition which assigned the land to Reuben and Gad only is less well known than that which included the half tribe of Manasseh, because the latter appears frequently elsewhere; see Dt. iii. 12 f., iv. 43, xxix. 7 f.; Jos. xii. 6, xiii. 29, 31, xiv. 3, xviii. 7. (2) In *vv.* 39, 41 f. the fact that Sihon's territory had already been conquered is disregarded, and portions of the tribe of Manasseh, represented by three clans, Machir, Jair, and Nobah, are related to have *attacked Gilead on their own account.* Now in Jos. xvii. 14 the 'house of Joseph' (i.e. Ephraim and Manasseh) had 'one lot only,' which was in the central hills on the west of Jordan. It seems therefore that at first the Manassites as a whole settled west of the Jordan, and that at a later time some of them made expeditions and gained land on the east. It may therefore be concluded that *vv.* 39, 41, 42 are not in their right position. They have been extracted from a much earlier account, such as we have in Jud. i., of the efforts of individual tribes, after Moses' death, to establish themselves in the country. See also note on *v.* 41.

land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place
was a place for cattle; the children of Gad and the children 2
of Reuben came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the
priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying,
Ataroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and [1]Nimrah, and Heshbon, 3
and Elealeh, and [2]Sebam, and Nebo, and [3]Beon, the land 4
which the LORD smote before the congregation of Israel, is
a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle. And they 5
said, If we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be
given unto thy servants for a possession; bring us not over
Jordan. And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to 6
the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to the war,
and shall ye sit here? And wherefore discourage ye the 7

[1] In ver. 36, *Beth-nimrah* [2] In ver. 38, *Sibmah*
[3] In ver. 38, *Baal-meon*

1. *the land of Jazer*] Jazer always appears, elsewhere, as the name not of a district but of a town (see *vv.* 3, 35 and notes on xxi. 24, 32). It is difficult to see any reason for its special mention here other than the fact that it marked the limit of Gilead on the east (cf. Jos. xiii. 25).

the land of Gilead] The extent of country covered by the name Gilead varies in different passages. Here, and in *v.* 29, the name denotes the land *south* of the R. Jabbok, as is shewn by the towns enumerated in *vv.* 3, 34—38; cf. Jos. xiii. 24 f. The modern name of this tract is 'the Belka.' But in *vv.* 39 f., Jos. xvii. 1, 5 f. the name Gilead is applied to land *north* of the Jabbok as far as the R. Jarmuk. Once more, these two tracts are sometimes treated as the two halves of Gilead (cf. Jos. xii. 2, 5, xiii. 31, Dt. iii. 12 f.), so that the name could be used in the widest sense of all the land occupied by Israel on the east of the Jordan (cf. Jos. xxii. 9, 13). Its borders on the north, east and south would vary from time to time, according as the neighbouring nations were weak or powerful; for example, at least ten of the fourteen towns in *vv.* 34—38 were at times in possession not of Israel but of Moab. The northern half of Gilead, in the wide sense, is an agricultural territory, its hills covered with forests, and its valleys and plains with orchards, vineyards and cornfields. But the southern half consists of moorland, useless for agriculture but affording rich pasture for flocks. See G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* ch. xxvii.

3. All these names recur in *vv.* 34—38, three of them in a slightly different form (see R.V. marg.). *Beon* is probably a mere scribal slip for *Meon*.

7. *discourage*] lit. 'oppose.' The word is the same as in xxx. 5 [Heb. 6].

heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land P
8 which the LORD hath given them? Thus did your fathers,
9 when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. For
when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the
land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel,
that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given
10 them. And the LORD's anger was kindled in that day, and
11 he sware, saying, Surely none of the men that came up out
of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the
land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto
12 Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me: save
Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, and Joshua the
son of Nun: because they have wholly followed the LORD.
13 And the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel, and he
made them wander to and fro in the wilderness forty years,
until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of
14 the LORD, was consumed. And, behold, ye are risen up in
your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment
15 yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel. For if ye
turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in
16 the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people. And
they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds
17 here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones: but we
ourselves will be ready armed to go before the children
of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place:

8—13. Moses refers to the narrative of the spies in chs. xiii. f. In the preliminary note to ch. xiii. it is shewn that that narrative is a combination of the traditions of JE and of P; and both of these supply material to the present passage. The starting-point and the destination of the spies (Kadesh and Eshcol) are from the former, and the mention of Joshua from the latter.

14. *an increase of sinful men*] *a* **brood** *of sinful men.* In angry rebuke Moses uses a contemptuous term. The subst. is not found elsewhere in the O.T.; but a similar word (R.V. 'increase') occurs in 1 Sam. ii. 33.

17. *will be ready armed*] Heb. has lit. 'will arm ourselves hastening.' But the expression is awkward, and the last word (חֻשִׁים) is doubtful. חֲמֻשִׁים should probably be read: *will* **arm ourselves in battle array**; cf. Ex. xiii. 18, Jos. i. 14, iv. 12.

P and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities because of the inhabitants of the land. We will not return unto our 18
houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance. For we will not inherit with them on the 19
other side Jordan, and forward; because our inheritance is fallen to us on this side Jordan eastward. And Moses said 20
unto them, If ye will do this thing; if ye will arm yourselves to go before the LORD to the war, and every armed man of 21
you will pass over Jordan before the LORD, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him, and the land be 22
subdued before the LORD: then afterward ye shall return, and be guiltless towards the LORD, and towards Israel; and this land shall be unto you for a possession before the LORD. But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the 23
LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out. Build you 24
cities for your little ones, and folds for your sheep; and do that which hath proceeded out of your mouth. And the 25
children of Gad and the children of Reuben spake unto Moses, saying, Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth. Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our cattle, 26
shall be there in the cities of Gilead: but thy servants will 27
pass over, every man that is armed for war, before the LORD to battle, as my lord saith.

So Moses gave charge concerning them to Eleazar the 28
priest, and to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the tribes of the children of Israel.

our little ones] Including, of course, the wives and all members of the family who were not fighting men. God would take care of them while all the soldiers were fulfilling the sacred duty of conquering the land of Canaan (cf. Ex. xxxiv. 24). An historical basis underlying the passage probably was that some portion of Gad took part in the battles on the west of Jordan. This seems to be referred to in the early poem in Dt. xxxiii. (*vv.* 20 f.).

23. *be sure your sin will find you out*] lit. 'know your sin, that it will find you.' The rendering of the E.V., which has passed, as a proverbial expression, into our current language, is based upon an ancient notion that sin, like a curse, has so to speak an individual existence. The sinner cannot escape its consequences; it will search and find him wherever he may hide himself. Cf. Gen. iv. 7 'sin coucheth at the door.'

24. *proceeded out of your mouth*] See on xxx. 2.

29 And Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad and the *P*
children of Reuben will pass with you over Jordan, every
man that is armed to battle, before the LORD, and the land
shall be subdued before you; then ye shall give them the
30 land of Gilead for a possession: but if they will not pass
over with you armed, they shall have possessions among
31 you in the land of Canaan. And the children of Gad and
the children of Reuben answered, saying, As the LORD hath
32 said unto thy servants, so will we do. We will pass over
armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, and the
possession of our inheritance *shall remain* with us beyond
33 Jordan. And Moses gave unto them, even to the children
of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, | and unto the half P_2
tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, | the kingdom of Sihon *P*
king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan,
the land, according to the cities thereof with *their* borders,
34 even the cities of the land round about. And the children
35 of Gad built Dibon, and Ataroth, and Aroer; and Atroth-
36 shophan, and Jazer, and Jogbehah; and Beth-nimrah, and
37 Beth-haran: fenced cities, and folds for sheep. And the
children of Reuben built Heshbon, and Elealeh, and

30. If they refused to join the rest of Israel in their battles, then, as a punishment, they must be forced, with their families and flocks, to live on the west of Jordan.

33. *and unto the half tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph*] This clause, or perhaps the whole verse, is a later addition to P. See prelim. note above.

34—38. Many of these towns have been identified with some probability. But the list represents a tradition very different from that in Jos. xiii. 15—28 (P), and must be ultimately derived from an earlier source, though in its present form it was probably written by a priestly writer. In Jos. xiii. 15—28 Reuben occupies the position which is ordinarily represented on modern maps, on the south of Gad, the dividing line between them running east from about the northern point of the Dead Sea. But in the present passage Reuben's position is not so independent. Five of the six towns assigned to them in *vv.* 37, 38 are situated in a district about midway between the Jabbok and the Arnon, and lie *between* Gadite towns to the north and south of them. They are thus represented as occupying an *enclave* within the Gadite area. Sibmah is unknown, as also are Atroth-shophan and Beth-nimrah. See G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geogr.* p. 567.

P Kiriathaim; and Nebo, and Baal-meon, (their names being 38
changed,) and Sibmah: and gave other names unto the
JE cities which they builded. | And the children of Machir the 39
son of Manasseh went to Gilead, and took it, and dis-
P_2 possessed the Amorites which were therein. | And Moses 40
gave Gilead unto Machir the son of Manasseh; and he
JE dwelt therein. | And Jair the son of Manasseh went and 41
took the towns thereof, and called them [1]Havvoth-jair.
And Nobah went and took Kenath, and the [2]villages there- 42
of, and called it Nobah, after his own name.

[1] That is, *The towns of Jair* [2] Heb. *daughters*

38. *their names being changed*] The parenthesis is strange, for the change of names by the Manassites is related immediately afterwards. Some think that it is a marginal note to the reader that the names are to be changed and read otherwise than they are written in the text. The words refer to Nebo and Baal-meon. Both Nebo and Baal suggested pagan worship, and the latter was frequently altered, e.g. Ish-bosheth, Mephi-bosheth, El-yada, for Ish-baal, Merib-baal, Baal-yada.

39. The individual action of clans (here and in *vv.* 41 f.) is similar to that described in Jud. i. 3, 22. See prelim. note.

40. A later addition to the chapter. See prelim. note. In 1 Ch. ii. 21, 23 the possession of Gilead by Machir is expressed by saying that Machir was 'the father of Gilead.'

41. *Jair the son of Manasseh*] This Manassite clan that took Gilead and gave its name to the district Havvōth-Jair ('the towns of Jair,' marg. or better 'the tent villages of J.') is mentioned in Jud. x. 3, 4 as Jair the Gileadite, and is represented as one of the judges of Israel. The territory which the clan occupied is identified in Dt. iii. 14 with Argob in Bashan (cf. Jos. xiii. 30). But Dt. iii. 5 is not in agreement with that, because Argob is described as a region of fenced cities with 'high walls, gates, and bars'; while the clan dwelt in tent villages. And in 1 K. iv. 13 the two districts seem to be expressly distinguished.

42. *And Nobah went and took Kenath*] The clan Nobah appears to have given its name to a place, which is mentioned with Jogbehah (see *v.* 35) in Jud. viii. 11. Kenath is identified by Euseb. and Jerome as *Kanatha*, the modern *Ḳanawāt*, which lay on the western slope of Jebel Ḥaurān. This was far to the north, and would make the present passage imply that the Nobah clan left the district where Nobah lay and migrated. But 1 Ch. ii. 23 places Kenath in close proximity with Ḥavvōth-Jair; and Jud. viii. 11 can be most easily explained if Kenath and Jogbehah lay near one another.

33 These are the [1]journeys of the children of Israel, [2]when P
they went forth out of the land of Egypt by their hosts
2 under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote
their goings out according to their journeys by the com-
mandment of the LORD: and these are their journeys
3 according to their goings out. And they journeyed from
Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first
month; on the morrow after the passover the children of
Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the
4 Egyptians, while the Egyptians were burying all their first-
born, which the LORD had smitten among them: upon their
5 gods also the LORD executed judgements. And the children
of Israel journeyed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth.
6 And they journeyed from Succoth, and pitched in Etham,
7 which is in the edge of the wilderness. And they journeyed
from Etham, and turned back unto Pi-hahiroth, which is
8 before Baal-zephon: and they pitched before Migdol. And
they journeyed from before Hahiroth, and passed through
the midst of the sea into the wilderness: and they went
three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham, and pitched
9 in Marah. And they journeyed from Marah, and came
unto Elim: and in Elim were twelve springs of water, and
threescore and ten palm trees; and they pitched there.
10 And they journeyed from Elim, and pitched by the Red Sea.
11 And they journeyed from the Red Sea, and pitched in the
12 wilderness of Sin. And they journeyed from the wilderness
13 of Sin, and pitched in Dophkah. And they journeyed from
14 Dophkah, and pitched in Alush. And they journeyed from
Alush, and pitched in Rephidim, where was no water for

[1] Or, *stages* [2] Or, *by which*

CHAP. XXXIII. 1—49.

The journey from Egypt to the steppes of Moab.

This itinerary includes some places mentioned elsewhere only in JE and others mentioned only in P; and it is probable that it was compiled by someone who had both P and JE before him. It must therefore belong to a late stage of P.

The itinerary may be divided into three sections. The first section (*vv.* 5—15) contains the journey from Raamses in Egypt to the Wilder-

P_2 the people to drink. And they journeyed from Rephidim, 15
and pitched in the wilderness of Sinai. And they journeyed 16
from the wilderness of Sinai, and pitched in Kibroth-hat-
taavah. And they journeyed from Kibroth-hattaavah, and 17
pitched in Hazeroth. And they journeyed from Hazeroth, 18
and pitched in Rithmah. And they journeyed from Rith- 19
mah, and pitched in Rimmon-perez. And they journeyed 20
from Rimmon-perez, and pitched in Libnah. And they 21
journeyed from Libnah, and pitched in Rissah. And they 22
journeyed from Rissah, and pitched in Kehelathah. And 23
they journeyed from Kehelathah, and pitched in mount
Shepher. And they journeyed from mount Shepher, and 24
pitched in Haradah. And they journeyed from Haradah, 25
and pitched in Makheloth. And they journeyed from 26
Makheloth, and pitched in Tahath. And they journeyed 27
from Tahath, and pitched in Terah. And they journeyed 28
from Terah, and pitched in Mithkah. And they journeyed 29
from Mithkah, and pitched in Hashmonah. And they 30
journeyed from Hashmonah, and pitched in Moseroth.
And they journeyed from Moseroth, and pitched in Bene- 31
jaakan. And they journeyed from Bene-jaakan, and pitched 32
in Hor-haggidgad. And they journeyed from Hor-haggidgad, 33
and pitched in Jotbathah. And they journeyed from Jot- 34
bathah, and pitched in Abronah. And they journeyed from 35
Abronah, and pitched in Ezion-geber. And they journeyed 36
from Ezion-geber, and pitched in the wilderness of Zin (the

ness of Sinai, which is related in Ex. xii. 37—xix. 2; two of the names, however, Dophkah and Alush, are not mentioned in Exod. The route appears to have run not to the south of the Sinaitic peninsula, according to the ordinary view which is represented on most modern maps, but straight across the desert (the route still followed by pilgrims to Mecca) from the frontier of Egypt at the north of the western arm of the Red Sea to Elim (*v.* 9) at the northern point of the eastern arm, the Gulf of Aḳaba; and thence to the Wilderness of Sinai *in the region of Ḳadesh*. See note on x. 30.

The second section (*vv.* 16—36) consists of places visited between the Wilderness of Sinai and the Wilderness of Ẓin (=Ḳadesh), *via* Ezion-geber which was close to Elim or Eloth on the Gulf of Aḳaba (1 K. ix. 26). This is probably a summary of the forty years' wanderings. The Wilderness of Sinai, if not the same as the Wilderness of Ẓin, is a closely adjacent region; and the names do not represent successive

37 same is Kadesh). And they journeyed from Kadesh, and P_2
pitched in mount Hor, in the edge of the land of Edom.
38 And Aaron the priest went up into mount Hor at the commandment of the LORD, and died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fifth month, on the first day of the month.
39 And Aaron was an hundred and twenty and three years old
40 when he died in mount Hor. And the Canaanite, the king of Arad, which dwelt in the South in the land of Canaan,
41 heard of the coming of the children of Israel. And they journeyed from mount Hor, and pitched in Zalmonah.
42 And they journeyed from Zalmonah, and pitched in Punon.
43 And they journeyed from Punon, and pitched in Oboth.
44 And they journeyed from Oboth, and pitched in Iye-abarim,
45 in the border of Moab. And they journeyed from Iyim,
46 and pitched in Dibon-gad. And they journeyed from Dibon-
47 gad, and pitched in Almon-diblathaim. And they journeyed from Almon-diblathaim, and pitched in the mountains of
48 Abarim, before Nebo. And they journeyed from the mountains of Abarim, and pitched in the plains of Moab
49 by the Jordan at Jericho. And they pitched by Jordan, from Beth-jeshimoth even unto Abel-shittim in the plains of Moab.

stages of one day's march each, but are the names of places, all comparatively near to one another, at which the Israelites encamped for a longer or shorter time. At some of them they must have settled for years. (See prelim. note on ch. xx.)

The third section (*vv.* 37—49) contains the march, after the forty years were expired, straight to the borders of Moab, nothing being said of the circuit *via* the Gulf of Akaba to avoid the Edomites. (See note on xxi. 10, 11.)

Very few of the names have been identified with any certainty, but the general route is clear from the mention of a few well-known places, such as Ezion-geber, at the northern extremity of the eastern arm of the Red Sea, Kadesh, in the desert to the S. of Judah, Dibon-Gad, the same as Dibon (see on xxi. 30), Nebo, a few miles S. of Heshbon, the mountains of the Abarim (see on xxi. 11), and the steppes of Moab.

38. See on xx. 22.

39. Aaron's age is calculated by adding forty years to his age at the Exodus (Ex. vii. 7).

40. A fragmentary statement strangely inserted, perhaps originally as a marginal note by a scribe. See on xxi. 1—3.

D And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab 50
by the Jordan at Jericho, saying, Speak unto the children of 51
Israel, and say unto them, When ye pass over Jordan into
the land of Canaan, then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants 52
of the land from before you, and destroy all their figured
stones, and destroy all their molten images, and demolish all
their high places: and ye shall take possession of the land, 53
and dwell therein: for unto you have I given the land to
P possess it. | And ye shall inherit the land by lot according 54
to your families; to the more ye shall give the more in-
heritance, and to the fewer thou shalt give the less inherit-
ance: wheresoever the lot falleth to any man, that shall
be his; according to the tribes of your fathers shall ye
D inherit. | But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the 55
land from before you; then shall those which ye let remain of
them be as pricks in your eyes, and as thorns in your sides,

50—56. *Commands with regard to the settlement in Canaan.* With the exception of *v.* 54 the passage is derived from D. In it is enjoined the destruction of the Canaanite objects of worship, a command which is peculiarly characteristic of Deuteronomic portions of the Pentateuch; cf. Ex. xxiii. 24, 31—33, xxxiv. 11—16, Dt. vii. 1—6, xii. 2 f. On the other hand *v.* 54 is an insertion by a writer of the P school. It deals with the division of the land by lot, and is expressed in the language and redundant style of P. It should be compared with xxvi. 52—56.

52. *ye shall drive out*] *ye shall* **dispossess.** The word הוֹרִישׁ in this sense is very frequent in Deut.

their figured stones] The literal meaning of the word seems to be 'something to be looked at.' It denotes the carved figures and symbols used in Canaanite idolatrous worship. Cf. Lev. xxvi. 1, Ezek. viii. 12.

their high places] The Hebrews learnt from the Canaanites the practice of erecting altars and sanctuaries on hills and natural mounds, to which the technical term *bāmōth* was applied. But the word seems to have acquired a more general force, and to have been used for any sanctuaries, even in valleys and by the gates of cities (cf. Jer. vii. 31, 2 K. xxiii. 8). In the present passage the word cannot refer to hills, for the Israelites are bidden to 'demolish them.' Some think that the *bāmōth* of later times may have been small artificial mounds, to represent the hills of the ancient worship; but there is no certain evidence of this.

54. *falleth to any man*] The lots would not be cast for individuals, but, as the last sentence of the verse shews, for whole tribes, or at most for clans. The Heb. is obscurely expressed, but it may be rendered *wheresoever the lot* **goeth forth for each, to that one shall it belong.**

55. *as pricks in your eyes, and as thorns in your sides*] Cf. Jos. xxiii. 13, Ezek. xxviii. 24, and perhaps Jud. ii. 3.

56 and they shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell. And *D*
it shall come to pass, that as I thought to do unto them, so
will I do unto you.

34 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the *P*
2 children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into
the land of Canaan, (this is the land that shall fall unto you
for an inheritance, even the land of Canaan according to the
3 borders thereof), then your south quarter shall be from the

CHAP. XXXIV. P.

Vv. 1—15. The boundaries of Israelite possessions on the west of the Jordan. *Vv.* 16—29. The appointment of ten princes to superintend the allotment of the land.

The eastern and western boundaries of the country are clearly defined. They are the R. Jordan and the 'Great Sea,' the Mediterranean. But the northern and southern limits are very uncertain, hardly any of the places mentioned having been identified. The *Southern Border* (*vv.* 3—5) runs from the Salt Sea (i.e. the Dead Sea), along the border of Edom, to the Mediterranean through two known points, Kadesh-Barnea and the 'Wady of Egypt' (see on *v.* 5). The other places named are unknown. The same names are found in a similar description of the southern border in Jos. xv. 2—4, except that Hezron takes the place of Hazar-addar, Addar being given as a distinct spot, and an additional unknown place Karka is named. And in Ezek. xlvii. 19, xlviii. 28 in the ideal picture of the boundaries of the future Israel four points are given to mark the southern border: Tamar (site unknown, but somewhere near the Dead Sea), Meriboth-Kadesh (= Kadesh-Barnea), 'the Wady,' and the Great Sea. The *Northern Border* (*vv.* 7—12) is still more uncertain. It started from a point on the Mediterranean described as Mt Hor, passed by the 'entrance of Hamath' (see on xiii. 21) and Zedad (unknown), ran eastward as far as Hazar-enan (unknown), and then turned southward to the sea of Chinnereth. No such northern boundary is described in Joshua, but Ezek. xlvii. 15—17 coincides with Num. as regards the Great Sea, Zedad, and Hazar-enan, the last, however, being spelt Hazar-enon.

It is probable that the boundaries here traced in P are, as in Ezekiel, ideal, and that the full extent of country which they imply was never actually possessed by Israel. This is certain as regards the west, for the Hebrews never held a single spot on the Mediterranean coast with the possible exception of Carmel, and, at certain periods, Joppa (see Hastings' *DB.* i. 355 and ii. 755). Joppa was captured by Jonathan Maccabaeus in 148 B.C. (1 Mac. x. 76) and again by his brother Simon six years later (xii. 33 f.; cf. xiv. 5).

For a fuller discussion than is here possible of the localities mentioned in this chapter the reader is referred to Gray, *Numbers*, pp. 454—462.

3. *your south quarter*] *your south* **side.** The word *pe'āh* frequently

P wilderness of Zin along by the side of Edom, and your south border shall be from the end of the Salt Sea eastward: and your border shall turn about southward of the ascent of 4
Akrabbim, and pass along to Zin: and the goings out thereof shall be southward of Kadesh-barnea; and it shall go forth to Hazar-addar, and pass along to Azmon: and the 5
border shall turn about from Azmon unto the brook of Egypt, and the goings out thereof shall be at the sea. And 6
for the western border, ye shall have the great sea [1]and the border *thereof*: this shall be your west border. And this 7
shall be your north border: from the great sea ye shall mark out for you mount Hor: from mount Hor ye shall 8
mark out unto the entering in of Hamath; and the goings out of the border shall be at Zedad: and the border shall 9
go forth to Ziphron, and the goings out thereof shall be at

[1] Or, *for a border*

occurs in the ideal pictures of Ezekiel (chs. xli.—xlviii.) always with this meaning. In earlier Heb. it denotes a 'corner.'

eastward] i.e. on the east. The southern extremity of the Salt Sea is further defined in Jos. xv. 2.

4. *the ascent of Akrabbim*] i.e. the 'Scorpion Pass.' 'From the Dead Sea the line indicated probably ran at first S.W. through the Wady el-Fikreh, which is a natural boundary, and then, turning round the Jebel Madurah [see on xx. 22], much more directly south to Kadesh. The ascent of 'Akrabbim may be sought in one of the passes on the N. side of the Wady el-Fikreh, and perhaps in particular in the Nakb el-Yemen, which starts just opposite the Jebel Madurah, or in the Nakb eṣ-Ṣafâ' (Gray).

5. *the brook of Egypt*] Heb. 'the *nahal* of *Miẓraim*.' A.V. 'the river of Egypt' gives the erroneous impression that the Nile is meant. The name is that of a wady or torrent, now called *Wâdy el-'Arîsh*, which rises in the centre of the Sinaitic peninsula, and flows northward into the Mediterranean about 50 miles S.W. of Gaza. It is possible that *Miẓraim* here denotes not Egypt proper, but the tract on the east of Egypt. The name *Muẓur* is frequently applied to the latter in Assyrian inscriptions.

6. *and the border* thereof] These words should be omitted. The word וּגְבוּל (*ûgebhûl* 'and a border') may have been accidentally added as a doublet of the preceding חֲגָדוֹל (*haggādhōl* 'the great'), which it somewhat resembles.

7. *mount Hor*] This is, of course, quite distinct from the mountain of the same name in the neighbourhood of Edom (xx. 22 ff., xxxiii. 38).

10 Hazar-enan: this shall be your north border. And ye shall *P*
mark out your east border from Hazar-enan to Shepham:
11 and the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah, on
the east side of Ain; and the border shall go down, and
shall reach unto the [1]side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward:
12 and the border shall go down to Jordan, and the goings out
thereof shall be at the Salt Sea: this shall be your land
13 according to the borders thereof round about. And Moses
commanded the children of Israel, saying, This is the land
which ye shall inherit by lot, which the LORD hath com-
manded to give unto the nine tribes, and to the half tribe:
14 for the tribe of the children of Reuben according to their
fathers' houses, and the tribe of the children of Gad according
to their fathers' houses, have received, and the half tribe of
15 Manasseh have received, their inheritance: the two tribes
and the half tribe have received their inheritance beyond
the Jordan at Jericho eastward, toward the sunrising.
16 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, These are the
17 names of the men which shall divide the land unto you for
inheritance: Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun.
18 And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the
19 land for inheritance. And these are the names of the men:
20 of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh. And
of the tribe of the children of Simeon, Shemuel the son of
21 Ammihud. Of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad the son of
22 Chislon. And of the tribe of the children of Dan a prince,
23 Bukki the son of Jogli. Of the children of Joseph: of the
tribe of the children of Manasseh a prince, Hanniel the son

[1] Heb. *shoulder*

11. *the side of the sea*] lit. 'the shoulder of the sea.' The word is a descriptive term referring to the mountain slopes on the N.E. of the lake; cf. Jos. xv. 10. The sea or lake is that known in N.T. times as the Sea, or Lake, of Galilee.

15. *beyond the Jordan*] The passage is written by some one on the *west* of the Jordan, which Moses never crossed.

16—29. Ten princes were appointed to superintend the allotment of the land, one from each of the nine and a half tribes who settled west of the Jordan. In supreme command are Joshua and Eleazar, the successors of Moses and Aaron as the civil and religious heads of the nation.

P of Ephod: and of the tribe of the children of Ephraim a 24
prince, Kemuel the son of Shiphtan. And of the tribe of 25
the children of Zebulun a prince, Elizaphan the son of
Parnach. And of the tribe of the children of Issachar a 26
prince, Paltiel the son of Azzan. And of the tribe of the 27
children of Asher a prince, Ahihud the son of Shelomi.
And of the tribe of the children of Naphtali a prince, 28
Pedahel the son of Ammihud. These are they whom the 29
LORD commanded to divide the inheritance unto the
children of Israel in the land of Canaan.

And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab 35
by the Jordan at Jericho, saying, Command the children of 2
Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of

CHAP. XXXV. P.

1—8. *The Levitical cities.*

The Levites are to receive 48 cities with their surrounding land (E.VV. 'suburbs'), six of which are to be 'cities of refuge.' The cities are to be contributed by each tribe in numbers proportionate to its size. Each plot of land is to be a square of 2,000 cubits (*c.* 1,000 yards). The carrying out of this law is related in fuller detail in Jos. xxi., where the allotment is as follows: the *Kohathite Levites* were given 10 towns in Ephraim, Dan and western Manasseh, the *Gershonites* 13 in Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and eastern Manasseh, the *Merarites* 12 in Reuben, Gad and Zebulun, while the *priests* had 10 in Judah, Simeon and Benjamin.

Two considerations, however, shew that this is a purely ideal arrangement, which could never have been actually brought about: 1st, In a hilly country like Palestine, cut with deep ravines, it would be impossible to find 48 square plots of land of such a size. 2nd, It is at variance with statements in earlier passages. (*a*) In Deuteronomy the Levites are classed with widows, orphans and strangers, as poor people who are commended to the charity of Israel; cf. Dt. xii. 12, 18 f., xiv. 27, 29, xvi. 11, 14, xxvi. 11 ff. In a few cases, indeed, priests settled in communities, and appear to have owned property, e.g. at Anathoth (1 K. ii. 26, Jer. xxxii. 6 ff.), Nob (1 S. xxi. 1, xxii. 19) and Bethel (Am. vii. 10); but the two latter towns are not included in the list in Jos. xxi. Dt. xviii. 8^b may imply that some Levitical priests owned private property, but the passage is uncertain. (*b*) In Num. xviii., which must belong to an earlier stage of P than the present passage, the offerings to be made to the priests are expressly stated to be due to them *because they have no landed property*. Ezekiel (ch. xlviii.) puts forward another ideal scheme for providing priests and Levites with land.

their possession cities to dwell in; and [1]suburbs for the *P*
cities round about them shall ye give unto the Levites.
3 And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and their suburbs
shall be for their cattle, and for their substance, and for all
4 their beasts. And the suburbs of the cities, which ye shall
give unto the Levites, shall be from the wall of the city and
5 outward a thousand cubits round about. And ye shall
measure without the city for the east side two thousand
cubits, and for the south side two thousand cubits, and for
the west side two thousand cubits, and for the north side two
thousand cubits, the city being in the midst. This shall be
6 to them the suburbs of the cities. And the cities which ye
shall give unto the Levites, they shall be the six cities of
refuge, which ye shall give for the manslayer to flee thither:
7 and beside them ye shall give forty and two cities. All the
cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty and
8 eight cities: them *shall ye give* with their suburbs. And
concerning the cities which ye shall give of the possession
of the children of Israel, from the many ye shall take many;
and from the few ye shall take few: every one according to
his inheritance which he inheriteth shall give of his cities
unto the Levites.
9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
10 the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye pass

[1] Or, *pasture lands*

2. *suburbs*] 'pasture lands' (marg.) rightly represents the true force of the word, which denotes lit. a place for *driving* cattle (cf. *v.* 3). But it came to be used more generally of common land surrounding a town, which all the inhabitants had the right to use. It occurs very frequently in P passages of Josh. and 1 Ch.

9—34. *The 'Cities of Refuge,' and the Law relating to homicide.*

In *vv.* 9—15 the appointment of the six cities and their purpose are prescribed; *vv.* 16—23 contain specimen cases distinguishing deliberate murder from accidental homicide; *vv.* 24—28 provide the legal procedure; *vv.* 29—34 form a conclusion.

The section presents the latest development in the O.T. of the Law of Asylum. In early days (Ex. xxi. 13 f. E) an appointed place was provided, to which the manslayer might flee, i.e. an altar, which would be within easy reach of every town; cf. 1 K. i. 50, ii. 28. In D (Dt. xix. 1—10), when only one altar was permitted, at the national sanctuary at Jerusalem, which would be practically useless for purposes of

P over Jordan into the land of Canaan, then ye shall appoint 11
you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the manslayer
which killeth any person [1]unwittingly may flee thither. And 12

[1] Or, *through error*

asylum, special cities were substituted for the local altars. Three cities were specified, and, if Jehovah enlarged the Israelites' borders, three more were to be added[1]. If the manslayer be guilty of deliberate murder, the elders of his own city shall send to the city whither he has fled for asylum, and shall deliver him up to the *gō'ēl* or 'avenger of blood'; but if the homicide was accidental, he may stay in safety in the city whither he has fled. In the present passage (P) the regulations are fuller. Of the six cities three are to be on each side of the Jordan (the fulfilment of the command, with the name of the cities, is related in Jos. xx.). They receive, for the first time, the title 'cities of refuge' (see on *v.* 11). When a manslayer flees to one of these cities, 'the congregation' (see on *v.* 12) judges between him and the *gō'ēl*, to discover whether the manslaughter had been deliberate or accidental. If it is proved to be accidental, the man must be taken back to the city of refuge, where he must remain until the death of the high priest. If he ventures out before that time, the *gō'ēl* may kill him. If, on the other hand, he is found guilty of deliberate murder, the *gō'ēl must* kill him.

Gray (*Numb.* p. 471) points out that this modifies the ancient custom in three respects: (1) Ancient custom made no distinction between accidental and deliberate manslaughter; the *gō'ēl* must see that the loss of life suffered by one family is compensated for. (2) In ancient custom the loss could be compensated for by the death of *any* member of the manslayer's family. Here the law tacitly insists that the murderer only is to forfeit his life. (3) The present law forbids the forfeited life of the murderer to be redeemed by a money payment. Such redemption was widely prevalent, but except in certain cases—not wilful murder—(cf. Ex. xxi. 29f.) it seems to have been prohibited at an early period in Israel, though the present law contains the earliest explicit prohibition. At the same time, the law had not yet reached its final stage of development, in that it still bade the representative of the *family*, and not the representative of the *whole community*, perform the judicial act of killing the murderer.

11. *ye shall appoint*] Perhaps better *ye shall* **select**. The verb in this sense is not found elsewhere in the O.T.

cities of refuge] Perhaps *cities of* **reception**, a term which occurs only in this chapter, and in Jos. xx., xxi. (P), 1 Chr. vi. 57, 67. The word is used in Rabbinic Heb. of the collection or reception of rainwater.

unwittingly] lit. 'in error.' See xv. 24 ff.

[1] Three have previously been mentioned in Dt. iv. 41—43; but it is unlikely that the writer of Dt. xix. understood nine cities to be intended. See Driver, *Deut.* p. 233.

the cities shall be unto you for refuge from the avenger; *P*
that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the con-
13 gregation for judgement. And the cities which ye shall give
14 shall be for you six cities of refuge. Ye shall give three cities
beyond Jordan, and three cities shall ye give in the land of
15 Canaan; they shall be cities of refuge. For the children of
Israel, and for the stranger and for the sojourner among
them, shall these six cities be for refuge: that every one that
16 killeth any person [1] unwittingly may flee thither. But if he
smote him with an instrument of iron, so that he died, he is
a manslayer: the manslayer shall surely be put to death.
17 And if he smote him with a stone in the hand, whereby
a man may die, and he died, he is a manslayer: the man-
18 slayer shall surely be put to death. Or if he smote him
with a weapon of wood in the hand, whereby a man may
die, and he died, he is a manslayer: the manslayer shall
19 surely be put to death. The avenger of blood shall himself
put the manslayer to death: when he meeteth him, he shall

[1] Or, *through error*

12. *the avenger*] Heb. *gō'ēl*, the nearest representative of the family of the slain man. Perhaps (with LXX.) we should read 'the avenger of blood,' as in *vv.* 19, 21. On the *gō'ēl* and his duties see n. on v. 8.

the congregation] It is not clearly stated that this means the congregation of the manslayer's city; and the word *'ēdah* elsewhere in P denotes the whole community of Israel. But in *v.* 25 (see note there) the words *'restore* him to his city of refuge' imply that the 'congregation' have taken him to some other place for judgement, which would more probably be his own city than any other; and in Dt. xix. 12 the judges in the case of murder are 'the elders of his city.'

14. In Jos. xx. the cities were selected as follows: on the E. of Jordan, Bezer in the south, Ramoth in Gilead, and Golan in Bashan; on the W. of Jordan, Kiriath-arba (= Hebron) in the south of Judah, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kedesh in Naphtali. Thus the south, centre and north on both sides of the river were provided for.

15. The cities may be used by every class of the community, the true born Israelite, the sojourner (*gēr*) and the stranger (*tōshābh*). See on ix. 14. Nothing is here said of slaves; they had no legal rights, and it is therefore improbable that they could claim any asylum.

16—23. Specimen cases of murder and accidental homicide respectively; cf. Ex. xxi. 13 f.

17. *a stone in the hand*] i.e. a stone held in the hand; cf. *v.* 18, Ezek. xxxix. 9 (E.VV. 'handstaves').

P put him to death. And if he thrust him of hatred, or 20
hurled at him, lying in wait, so that he died; or in enmity 21
smote him with his hand, that he died: he that smote him
shall surely be put to death; he is a manslayer: the avenger
of blood shall put the manslayer to death, when he meeteth
him. But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, or hurled 22
upon him any thing without lying in wait, or with any stone, 23
whereby a man may die, seeing him not, and cast it upon
him, so that he died, and he was not his enemy, neither
sought his harm: then the congregation shall judge between 24
the smiter and the avenger of blood according to these
judgements: and the congregation shall deliver the man- 25
slayer out of the hand of the avenger of blood, and the con-
gregation shall restore him to his city of refuge, whither he
was fled: and he shall dwell therein until the death of the
high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil. But if 26
the manslayer shall at any time go beyond the border of his
city of refuge, whither he fleeth; and the avenger of blood 27
find him without the border of his city of refuge, and the
avenger of blood slay the manslayer; [1]he shall not be guilty

[1] Or, *there shall be no blood-guiltiness for him*

20. *thrust him*] i.e. pushed him, in such a way as to cause his death; e.g. over a cliff, or off the roof of a house.

24—28. The legal procedure in the case of accidental homicide.

24. *according to these judgements*] i.e. guided by the foregoing specimen cases. A similar type of rule, based on hypothetical cases, is seen in the 'Judgements' in Ex. xxi.—xxii. 17.

25. *shall restore him*] It is not stated where the congregation had taken him for judgement, but it was presumably to his own city. It is not, however, impossible that 'the congregation' means, as elsewhere in P, the whole community of Israel, and that P tacitly assumed that Jerusalem would be the place of judgement.

the high priest] lit. 'the *great* priest.' The title is used in P of Aaron and his eldest descendants. Outside the Hexateuch, it first appears of Jehoiada (2 K. xii. 10), then of Hilkiah (2 K. xxii. 4, 8); and after the exile, of Joshua (Hag. i. 1 &c., Zech. iii. 1, 8) and Eliashib (Neh. iii. 1, 20, xiii. 28). The high priest was the head of the religious affairs of the Jewish church, and rose, in the popular estimation, to a higher importance than the civil governor who was appointed by a foreign power. So that 'until the death of the high priest' would have almost the same force that the words 'until the death of the reigning sovereign' would bear to-day.

28 of blood: because he should have remained in his city of *P*
refuge until the death of the high priest: but after the death
of the high priest the manslayer shall return into the land of
29 his possession. And these things shall be for a statute of
judgement unto you throughout your generations in all your
30 dwellings. Whoso killeth any person, the manslayer shall
be slain at the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall
31 not testify against any person that he die. Moreover ye
shall take no ransom for the life of a manslayer, which is
32 guilty of death: but he shall surely be put to death. And
ye shall take no ransom for him that is fled to his city of
refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until
33 the death of the priest. So ye shall not pollute the land where-
in ye are: for blood, it polluteth the land: and no expiation
can be made for the land for the blood that is shed therein,
34 but by the blood of him that shed it. And thou shalt not
defile the land which ye inhabit, in the midst of which I
dwell: for I the LORD dwell in the midst of the children of
Israel.

36 And the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the family of the
children of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh,
of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near, and spake
before Moses, and before the princes, the heads of the

29. *a statute of judgement*] See on xxvii. 11.

30. *one witness shall not testify* &c.] This re-enforces the law of Dt. xvii. 6. In Dt. xix. 15 three, or at least two, witnesses are required to substantiate any charge (cf. Matt. xviii. 16).

31, 32. The murderer's life may not be ransomed. And the man who has committed accidental homicide may not pay a ransom in lieu of detention in the city of refuge. These prohibitions emphasize the extreme value of human life.

34. See note on v. 1—4.

CHAP. XXXVI. P.

The chapter lays down a law that heiresses may not be married to anyone outside their own tribe. As in ch. xxvii., the present law is put in a concrete form. In ch. xxvii. it was ruled that the daughters of Zelophehad might inherit property, in order that the inheritance might not be alienated from the tribe of Manasseh. But it was realised that that law might, after all, be annulled if they were married to persons of other tribes. Here, therefore, the supplementary law is issued, forbidding them to do so.

P fathers' *houses* of the children of Israel: and they said, The 2
LORD commanded my lord to give the land for inheritance
by lot to the children of Israel: and my lord was com-
manded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad
our brother unto his daughters. And if they be married to 3
any of the sons of the *other* tribes of the children of Israel,
then shall their inheritance be taken away from the in-
heritance of our fathers, and shall be added to the inheritance
of the tribe whereunto they shall belong: so shall it be taken
away from the lot of our inheritance. And when the jubile 4
of the children of Israel shall be, then shall their inheritance
be added unto the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they
shall belong: so shall their inheritance be taken away from
the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers. And Moses 5
commanded the children of Israel according to the word of
the LORD, saying, The tribe of the sons of Joseph speaketh
right. This is the thing which the LORD doth command 6
concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them
marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the
tribe of their father shall they marry. So shall no inheritance 7
of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for the
children of Israel shall cleave every one to the inheritance
of the tribe of his fathers. And every daughter, that pos- 8
sesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel,
shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her
father, that the children of Israel may possess every man
the inheritance of his fathers. So shall no inheritance 9
remove from one tribe to another tribe; for the tribes of the
children of Israel shall cleave every one to his own in-
heritance. Even as the LORD commanded Moses, so did 10

4. In the year of Jubile, i.e. every fiftieth year, all *purchased* land returned to its original owners, or their descendants. But the law of Jubile would not affect the cases in which land was *inherited* by persons of another tribe. It would, indeed, be inherited by descendants of Zelophehad in the female line, but this would not prevent it from being permanently severed from the tribe of Manasseh.

The law of Jubile is contained in Lev. xxv. See notes in the commentary in this series. The word 'Jubile' is formed from the Heb. *yōbhēl*, a '*ram's horn*' trumpet. The fiftieth year was called 'the year of the *yōbhēl*,' or, more shortly, 'the *yōbhēl*,' because it was ushered in by the blowing of trumpets.

11 the daughters of Zelophehad: for Mahlah, Tirzah, and *P*
Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophe-
12 had, were married unto their father's brothers' sons. They
were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh the
son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of
the family of their father.

13 These are the commandments and the judgements, which *R*
the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses unto the
children of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at
Jericho.

11. In accordance with the law, the five women were married to the sons of their paternal uncles.

13. A subscription appended to the series of priestly laws related to have been given during the time that Israel was in the land of Moab, i.e. between xxii. 1 and xxxvi. 12. A similar subscription is appended, in Lev. xxvii. 34, to the laws given at Sinai. But after that subscription further laws at Sinai are collected in Num. i. ff. It has therefore been conjectured that both subscriptions were added by a scribe, when the Pentateuch was divided into five books.

INDEX.

Aaron, an Amramite, xvii, 17; age of, 178; complaint against Moses, 65; consecrates the Levites, xvi; death of, 105, 108; entering the tent, 66; 'generations' of, 12; makes atonement with incense, 91; priests descended from, xvi, 85, 95, 145; represents priests, 13; represents tribe of Levi, 12; sin of, 107; sons of, xxvi, 13; 'the great priest,' 187; 'waves' the Levites, xviii
Abarim (Abharim), 113, 153, 178
Abel-Shittim, 143
Abiram, 85, 146
Adonai, 74
Agag, 138
'ahālīm, 137
Ahiman, 70
Akaba, Gulf of, 177
Akrabbim, ascent of, 181
alarm, blow an, 51
Amalek, Amalekite, 76, 140
Ammon, 125
Ammonites, 114
Amorites, 114, 119, 120
Amramites, xvii
Anak, sons of, 70, 72
Anointing, 13
Ar, 115, 130
Arad, king of, 110; Negeb of, 110
Aram, 132
'arīsōth, the first of, 81
ark of the Covenant, 55, 78
ark, prayers connected with, 56
Arnon, 114 f.
'asaphsūph, 59
'ashīshāh, 32
assembly, solemn, 160
Asshur, 141 f.
asylum, law of, 184
Atharim, 110
Atonement, day of, 155, 158
'az, 119
'aẓereth, 160
'azkārāh, 30

Baālīm, 143
Baal-meon, 175
Baal-peor, 143
Balaam, xxiv, xxvii, 123, 144, 165 f.
Balak, 124
bāmōth, 116, 179
Bamoth-Baal, 130 f.
Barcochba, 139
Bashan, 122
bath, 64
Beer, 115
beeves, 168
Beth-peor, 135
blessing, priestly function of, 37
Booths, Festival of, 155, 160
boundaries of Israelite possessions, 180
Brook of Egypt, 181
burnt offerings, 35, 80, 82, 155

Caleb, 68 f., 72–76, 151; history of, 75; Negeb of, 75
Calebites, 76
Calendar, priestly, 52

camp, 11; arrangement of, xxvi, 9; order of the host, 53
Canaanite, 110
cedar wood, 101 f., 137
censers, 86
census, 3–5, 7 f.; the second, 145 f.
Chemosh, 120
Chronicler, xvi f. n.
cities of refuge, 184 f.
clarions, silver, 50
cloud, 59, 65, 67, 74; fiery, 49; of Jehovah, 56
conscience money, 26
continual bread, 21
'contribution' (heave-offering), xviii, 27, 81, 96 f., 100
cords of the court, xvii, 16
coriander seed, 60
court of Tabernacle, xvii
covenant, 145
covering, the, 16
Cush, 65

Dathan, 85, 146
dead body, pollution by contact with, 33, 47, 101 f., 166
deghel, 9 f.
Deuteronomy, x, xv, xviii
devoted thing, 98
Dibon, 121, 178
Dibon-Gad, 178
Doughty, reference to, 9
drink-offering, 80, 155

E, document known as, ix, x
Eber, 142
Edom, 107 f.
Edrei, 123
elders, 61 f.
Eleazar, xvii, 13, 17, 22, 77, 101, 109, 144, 146, 164, 166, 170, 182
Elim, 177
ephah, 28, 64, 79
Eshcol, 70 f., 172
Ezekiel, xiv, xxv, 7, 74, 79, 180, 183
Ezion-geber, 177 f.
Ezra, xxv
'ezrāḥ, 48

fathers' house, 2
Festivals, Booths, 155, 160; Passover, xxvii, 47, 155; Trumpets, 52, 155; Weeks, 155
figured stones, 179
fire of Jehovah, 57
fire-pans, 86, 90, 91
firstborn, xvii, 18
firstlings, xvii
Flinders Petrie, reference to, 7
forty years, x, 105 f.
Frazer, *Totemism*, reference to, 124
fringes, 84

Gad, 170, 174
gay, 117
generations, 12
gēr, 48, 81, 186
gērāh, 19
Gershonites, xvi, 22 f., 37, 53
Gilead, 151, 171, 175
'given,' used of Levites, 14, 45, 96
glory of Jehovah, xxvi, 73
gō'ēl, 26 f., 185 f.
Great Sea, 180
guilt offering, 26 f., 34

hair, burning of, 35; let loose, 29; left uncut, 33
Hamath, entrance of, 70
hangings, xvii
haṭṭā'th, 103
Havvōth-Jair, 175
Hazeroth, 65
haṣērōth, 50
heave-offering, 27, 81, 100
Hebron, 70
Hebronites, 150
heifer, the red, 101
Hepher, 151
hērem, 98, 111
Herodotus, 64
Heshbon, 119 ff., 178
Hexateuch, ix
high priest, 187
hin, 19

Ḥobab, xxiii, 52, 54
holiness, xxv, 91, 104; law of, xxv, 15, 155
Holy of Holies, xvii
Holy Place, xvii
holy water, 29
homeborn, 81
homer, 64
homicide, 187
Hormah, 79, 110 f.
Hoshea, 69
hyssop, 101 f.

inheritance, law of, 151 f.
Ishmaelites, 169
Ithamar, xvii, 13, 23
Iye-abarim, 113

J, document known as, ix f.
Jabbok, 118
Jahaz, 118
Jair, 170, 175
Jazer, 119, 122, 171
JE, document known as, ix, x, xxi f., xxiii f.
jealousy, divine, 144
Jehovah, angel of, 128; book of wars of, 114
Jeremiah, xvi n.
Jeshimon, 117
Jethro, 54
Joshua, 59, 63, 68 f., 72 f., 76, 151, 153, 170, 172, 182
Jubile, 151, 189

Ḳadesh, xxi, 78, 105, 107, 153, 172, 177 f.
Ḳain, 141
Ḳenath, 175
Kenites, 141
Kibroth-hattaavah, 57
Kiriath-huzoth, 130
Kittim, 141 f.
Kohath, 150
Kohathites, xvii, 19 f., 22, 53
Korah, xxvii, 146, 152; sons of, 147
Korahites, 150
Koran, 167

lampstand, 43
Lane, *Modern Egyptians*, referred to, 60
laws, three groups of, in Numbers, xxii
laymen, inferior to Levites, xviii
leper, purification of the, 102
leprosy, 67
Levi, priests and Levites descended from, xvi
Levite, *lēwī*, xv, 95
Levites, Levi tribe of, age of service, xvii, 19, 46; census of, 150; ceremonies at consecration of, xvii f., 44; covenant given to tribe of, 145; duties of, 94; families of, 15; forty-eight cities assigned to, xviii, 183; in earlier times a body of priests, xv; in later times inferior to priests, xvi, xxv; Korah's complaint against, 85; not numbered as fighting men, 6; perquisites and tithes paid to, xviii, xxviii, 99; priests served by, xxvi, 12, 13; regulations respecting the, xvi; status and rights of, 85; substitutes for firstborn, xvii, 14, 18; substitutes for the laity, 46; superiority over laymen, xviii
libations, 79, 82, 155
Libnites, 150
lign-aloes, 137
litter wagons, 38
little ones, 172
Lock, referred to, 124
LXX., referred to, 2, 10, 14, 19, 23, 25, 27, 29, 35, 38, 47, 51, 55, 59 f., 67, 72, 74, 86, 91, 103, 111, 116, 121, 121 n., 125, 132, 135, 138, 164

Machir, 151, 170, 175
Mahlites, 150
Manasseh, half tribe of, 170, 174
manna, xxiv, xxvii, 57, 58, 60; as a type, 60
māshāl, 132

Mattanah, 116
maṭṭeh (='staff' and 'tribe'), 10
Max Müller, referred to, 104
meal-offering, 79, 82, 155
Medeba, 121
memorial offering, 30
Merari, 150
Merarites, xvii, 23, 37, 53
Meribah, 105 f., 153
Mesha, 122
Micah, xv
Midian, 125 n., 163; elders of, 124
Midianites, 145, 169
Midrash, 163, 164
Miriam, 65 f.; death of, 105 f.
mishkān, 89
mixed multitude, 59
Miṣraim, 181
Moab, 114, 120, 122; steppes of, 123, 178
Moabites, 119
Mōsērāh, -oth, 109
Moses, an Amramite, xvii; and Elijah, 61; effect on history and character of Israel, xx; as chief, xxi; character of, xxiii, 66; complaint of burden, 58, 61; dealings with Reuben and Gad, 170; dispensing oracles, xv; entering the tent, 66; faithful in God's house, xxvii, 67; gift of his spirit, xxiv, 58, 62; guardian of the ark, 78; historicity of the account in Numbers, xx; intercession, 57, 73, 88; intercourse with God, 43; mentioned in the third person, 17; represents tribe of Levi, 12; request to Hobab, xxiii, 52, 54; sin of, 107; to present Levites for consecration, xvi, xviii; unique as prophet, xxiv, 65; views the land, 153
Mount Hor, 109, 181
murmurings, xxiii, xxvii, 57, 93
Mushites, 150

nahal, 70, 113, 115
Nahaliel, 116
Nazirites, xxviii, 31 f.
Nĕbo, 153, 175, 178
Negeb, 69 ff., 76, 78, 110, 119
nephesh, 167
Nephilim, 72
Nethinim, 14
nēzer, 33
niddāh, 103
Nobah, 170, 175
Nophah, 121
Numbers, Book of, name, ix; composition, ix f.; analysis, xi–xiv; historical value, xix–xxii; religious value, xxii–xxvi

obligation (a pledge of abstinence), 161
Oboth, 112 f.
offering, burnt, 35, 80, 82, 155; drink, 80, 155; heave, 27, 81, 100; guilt, 26 f., 34; meal, 79, 82, 155; memorial, 30; peace, 35 f., 80; public, 155; sin, 34 f., 82, 103 f., 159; wave, 36, 45, 96 f.
Og, xxiv, 117 f., 122
omer, 64
On, 86
oracles, xv, 136
ordeal, 28, 86; of jealousy, 25, 27
Orr, referred to, 8

P, document known as, ix f., xvi, xxi, xxii, xxiii, xxiv
Pallu, 86
Passover, xxvii, 155; supplementary, 47
pavilion, 144
peace-offering, 35 f., 80
pe'āh, 180
pegs of the court, xvii, 23
Peleth, son of, 86
Peor, 135, 143, 166
Pethor, 125
Phinehas, 143 f., 164
pillar of cloud, xxiv
Pisgah, 117, 133, 135, 153

pollution, ceremonial, xxv, 25, 44, 47, 68, 101–4, 166
potion, 28 f.
prayer, xxiv
'Presence Bread,' 21
Priests, dues to, 96, 99; duties of, 94; function of blessing, 37
Prince, xvii, 68
prophesy, 58, 63
proverbs, they that speak in, 120
public offerings, amounts of, 155

quails, xxiv, 57 f., 62, 64

Rechabites, 32
red cow, purification by ashes of, 101
redemption, 14, 18, 26, 96, 98
rē'shīth, 81, 98, 140
Reuben, 170, 174
Reuel, 54
running water, 104

Sabbath, 155; penalty for breaking, 83
sacred seasons, offerings at, 155
sacred shekel, 18
salt of a covenant, 99
satan, a, 128
scarlet thread, 101
Scorpion Pass, 181
screens of the tent and the court, xvii
sēpher, 30
serpent, xxiv; bronze, xxvii, 111 f.; fiery, 112
Shaddai, 137
shadow, 73
shēbhet (='staff' and 'tribe'), 10
shekel of the Sanctuary, 98
shekīnah, 73
shelāmīm, 35
Sheol, 90
Sheshai, 70
shewbread, 21
Shittim, 142
shōphār, 50
Sihon, xxiv, 117, 122
sin-offering, 34 f., 82, 103 f., 159
Sinai, site of, 55, 177
Smith, G. A., *Hist. Geogr.*, referred to, 69, 113–116, 122, 128, 171, 174
Smith, W. R., referred to, 124, 156
sojourner, 81
soothing odour, 80
spies, 68, 172
Spirit, xxiv, 62, 154; Divine, 64; of ecstasy, 57
spoil, apportionment of, 167
staff of Aaron, xxviii, 93 f., 106
Stanley, referred to, 124
star, as metaphor, 139
strange fire, 13
stranger, 7, 48, 81, 95
suburbs, 184
Suphah, 115

Taberah, 56 f.
tabernacle, 16, 89; sacredness of, 7
Talmai, 70
tassels to be worn, 84
tent, xvii, xxvi, 16, 78; of meeting, 1 f., 59, 66; outside the camp, 65
terūmāh, 27
testimony, 6, 58
thigh of contribution, 35 f.
thousands, 3, 7
tithe, paid to Levites, xviii, xxviii, 99–101
tôshābh, 48, 186
transgressions, deliberate, 82; inadvertent, 81
Trumpets, Festival of, 52, 155
Tummim, 154, 164

unclean persons, 25
uncleanness, 47, 104
Unleavened Cakes, Festival of, 155, 160
Urim, 154, 164

Vaheb, 115
veil, xvii, 17, 96
vows, fulfilment of, xxviii, 161

Wady of Egypt, 180
Wâdy el-'Arîsh, 181
water, of bitterness, 29; of impurity, 101, 102, 103, 167; of sin, xvii, 44; from the rock, xxvii, 107
'wave,' 36, 45; offering, 96 f.
Weeks, Festival of, 155
whoredom, 77
wild-ox, 134
Wilderness of Paran, 53, 68, 105
Wilderness of Sinai, 177
Wilderness of Zin, 70, 105, 177
wind from Jehovah, 64
wrath, emanation of God's, 92

Yashar, Book of, 114
yôbhēl, 50, 189

zâbh, 38
zâr, 95
Zelophehad, and his five daughters, 152, 188
Zered, Wady of, 113
Ẓippor, 124
Ẓippōrah, 65
ṣîṣîth, 84
Ẓophim, field of, 133
Zur, 145, 165

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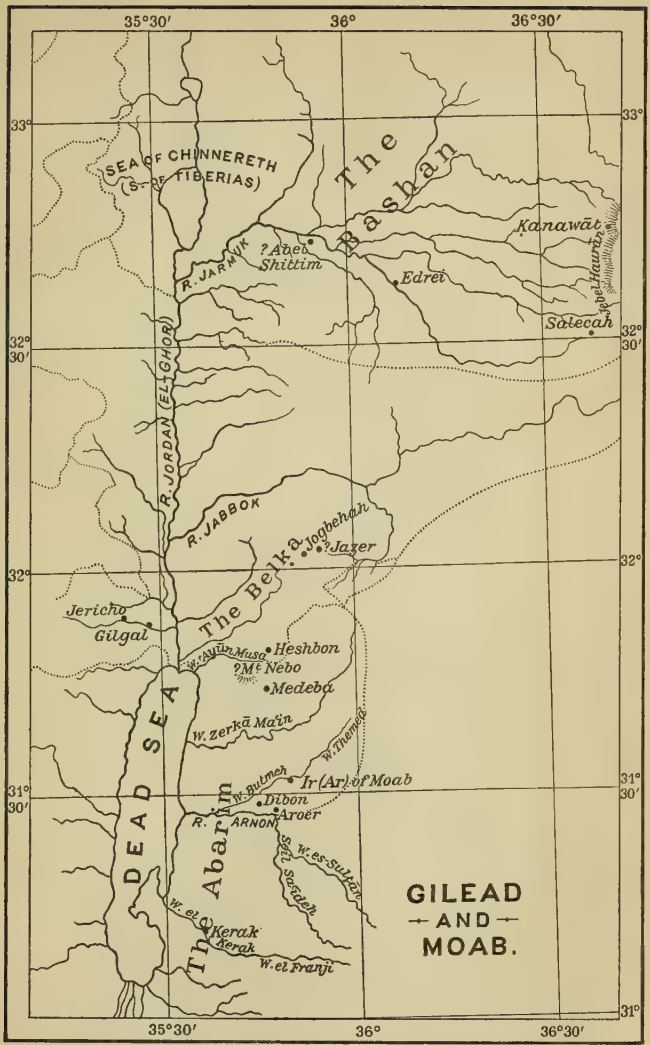

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